

Hafa Adai!

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NMI DOL to process remaining PUA claims. **PAGE 6**

Volume XXX, Issue No. 226
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 13, 2020
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Saipan Tribune

35TH ANNIVERSARY

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the Japanese Society of the Northern Marianas and their families celebrated last Nov. 7, 2020, the 35th anniversary of the construction of the Saipan Katori Shrine at the Sugar King Park in Garapan. The stripped-down ceremony was also held online to allow the virtual participation of Katori Shrine representatives in Chiba, Japan.

Story on Page 5

AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, Nov. 12, 2020

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	5,654	101	5,755
Recovered	3,667	0	3,667
Active	1,896	101	1,997
Deaths	91	0	91
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			74,067

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	100	0	100
Traced via Travel Screening	74	0	74
Traced via Community Screening	26	0	26
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			22,633*
Days since last community transmission			87

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted not to report active and recovered cases. The community-based testing has been temporarily suspended.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:

- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

CHCC seeks power rate change

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. is working to change its power rate from government to commercial, which is being touted as a means to lower CHCC's monthly power bill.

See CHCC on Page 4

'EAD holders awaiting green cards ineligible for PUA'

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The CNMI Department of Labor has confirmed that individuals who hold an employment authorization document while awaiting an adjustment in their immigration status, or

green card application, do not qualify for Pandemic Unemployment Authorization.

In an interview with Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente, she said C09 EAD holders do not qualify for PUA even though they are legally al-

See EAD on Page 4

Babauta sworn in today as Precinct 1 rep

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Former Department of Public Safety official Franklin Reyes Babauta will be sworn in today, Friday, as a representative of Precinct 1 for the House of Representatives. Come January, he will turn over the House



Babauta

office's keys to his wife, who won the same seat at the Nov. 3 election.

Superior Court Presiding Judge Roberto C. Naraja will administer the oath of office for Babauta at a ceremony in the House chamber at 10am.

Babauta will be in office until Jan.

See BABAUTA on Page 4

JUST IN TIME FOR HOLIDAY SEASON Lights are back on at pathway, Garapan Street

Garapan just got a bit brighter heading into the holiday season.

This comes soon after the Torres-Palacios administration, through the Office of Grants Management, fixed and relit damaged lights along

Garapan Street and the Gov. Froilan C. Tenorio Beach Road Pathway.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said the relighting of a main thoroughfare within the CNMI tourism district and the very popular pathway along

the Saipan Lagoon has been in the works since the lights were first damaged by Super Typhoon Yutu.

"It's been a long time coming, but through the hard work and dedication of our OGM

See LIGHTS on Page 4

INSIDE



BUSINESS

Running three businesses at the same time is possible, but it takes a special team to make it work.

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ASIA

Another typhoon batters the Philippines, leaving at least one person dead and three missing.

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SCIENCE & TECH

Scientists in Washington state destroy the first nest of so-called murder hornets found in the U.S.

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Local

IN CASE FILED BY 7 CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

Gold Mantis' noncompliance could result in default judgment

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

The U.S. District Court for the NMI has warned Gold Mantis Construction Decoration (CNMI) LLC that it would rule against the company if it continues to remain non-compliant.

District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona issued a show-cause order against Gold Mantis for not complying with a previous order regarding discovery in the lawsuit of seven workers.

Manglona ordered Gold Mantis to show cause in writing as to why the court should not enter default judgment in favor of the plaintiffs.

In addition, the court also wants an explanation from Gold Mantis on why the court should not treat its noncompliance as contempt of court, and why the court should not impose a civil contempt sanction requiring Gold Mantis to pay a \$2,000 daily fine from the time all discovery and affidavits were to be produced.

Manglona ordered Gold Mantis to respond no later than Nov. 15 at 5pm. She has also scheduled a hearing for Nov. 25 at 9am.

Aaron Halegua, who represents Tianming Wang, one of the seven construction workers, filed a status report on Nov. 5 informing the court that Gold Mantis has not complied with any of the seven items in a previous court order.

"No discovery was tendered; no affidavits were pro-

vided (or any drafts thereof); no updated discovery responses were served; and Gold Mantis did not file a certification that it had complied with the order. Indeed, Gold Mantis has not filed any status update with the court," he said.

Back in Oct. 19, Manglona ordered Gold Mantis to produce all bank records, produce all records held by Gold Mantis' accountant, produce all documents related to a People's Republic of China government inquiry into Gold Mantis' operations on Saipan,

produce all responsive electronically-stored information or ESI, provide detailed affidavits describing Gold Mantis' efforts to preserve and search for ESI, provide updated responses to

the plaintiffs' request for proposals and interrogatories, and submit a certification of compliance with the order. Gold Mantis was ordered to provide these by Oct. 29.

Manglona's order also directed the plaintiffs to file a status report by Nov. 6.

Aside from Wang, the other plaintiffs in the case are Dong Han, Yongjun Meng, Liangcai Sun, Youli Wang, Qingchun Xu and Duxin Yan.

The plaintiffs worked for MCC International and Gold Mantis, former contractor and subcontractor of Imperial Pacific International.

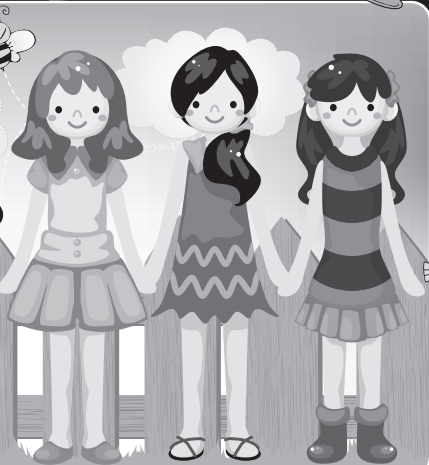
The plaintiffs are suing the defendants for forced labor, negligence, and liability for employees of subcontractors. The plaintiffs are also alleging human trafficking violations.



Halegua

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MCS accreditation renewed with high marks

Mount Carmel School's accreditation has been renewed, marking 25 years since the initial achievement of this distinction in 1995.

Mount Carmel School's accreditation is currently granted by Cognia, a nonprofit improvement organization that provides quality assurance for schools, school districts, and education service providers. Cognia's report accompanying the accreditation renewal also recognized the school for several impressive achievements.

School president Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Ed.D., thanked Cognia and the school's accreditation chairs, counselor Tobed Smith and vice principal Bobby Baldazo, as well as the entire school family "for all their hard work in making this happen." He said the accreditation renewal with commendations from Cognia is conferred by the Cognia Global Accreditation Commission and provides a nationally recognized mark of quality for MCS.

Cognia's accreditation report gave MCS high marks in a number of areas. Based on Cognia's Index of Educational Quality, the school's IEQ score is 293, which is higher than the Cognia institutional average range of 278.34-283.33. The

report recognized the school as achieving high impact in several categories, including school mission, leadership and governance, stakeholder engagement, and strategic use of resources. The team writing the report also commended the school for some key strengths, including the school's culture of family, a dedicated board and leadership, and a diversity of stakeholders. "There exists a culture of family that is impactful to promoting the school's purpose," the report said. "The dedicated and impactful board and leadership demonstrate commitment and dedication to meeting the needs of the school culture with students as the focal point of their work."

In addition to the commendations, the report offered clear and useful guidance for improvement in important areas such as curriculum, systemic and systematic processes and procedures, formalized supervision and evaluation, and data analysis.

According to school principal Frances Taimanao, "We look forward to using the valuable insights of this report to develop our next strategic master plan and continue improving all that we do and all that we are."

Throughout its more than

125 years of service, Cognia, formerly AdvancED, has globally recognized schools that meet rigorous standards focused on productive learning environments, equitable resource allocation for the needs of learners, and effective leadership. Earning accreditation from the Cognia Global Accreditation Commission is a recognition that the school meets Cognia Standards of Quality and maintains a commitment to continuous improvement. To earn Cognia accreditation, a school also must implement a continuous process of improvement and submit to external review. Schools in good standing can maintain their accreditation for a five-year term.

See MCS on Next Page



Mount Carmel School president Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Ed.D., second from left, MCS principal Frances Taimanao, far left, MCS vice principal Bobby Baldazo, far right, and counselor Tobed Smith discuss the next steps in the accreditation process.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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Falun Dafa group to hold 8 weekends of motorcades

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

The Saipan Falun Dafa will be holding an “End Chinese Communist Party” motorcade for eight straight weekends on both Saturdays and

Sundays, starting this Saturday, Nov. 14, up to Jan. 3, 2021, from 2pm to 4pm.

The association’s motorcade route will start from the American Memorial Park’s parking lot to Koblerville Mobil Gas Station and will end at the

Falun Dafa’s headquarters.

Saipan Falun Dafa Association’s Xuankun Li confirmed that they have asked the Department of Public Safety for permission and assistance for the motorcade. Additionally, they hope to reach out to Delegate Gregorio Kilili

C. Sablan (Ind-MP) for support.

The association promises to comply with traffic rules throughout the whole motorcade and coordinate all the vehicles in their group. Additionally, they will have at least one passenger and driver and will be equipped with a Zello PTT walkie talkie application installed after being tested on the driver or passenger cell phone.

Li said in a statement that the motorcade is intended to convey the

group’s opposition to the CCP’s “evil work and anti-human nature.” The Saipan Falun Dafa Association was founded on Saipan in 2002 as a non-profit organization and has actively participated in the public affairs of the CNMI community. That includes 19 years of participation and performance in the Flame Tree Art Festival and Liberation Day Parade, more than 15 years at the Garapan’s Thursday Street Market, and more than six years at the Taste of the Marianas Festival.

CHCC

From Page 1

At the regular CUC board meeting yesterday, CUC board member Matthew Holley stated in a text message that CHCC has been on the higher government rate and is asking to have the commercial rate, which is lower.

If CUC and CHCC agree to this change, CHCC will be able to get a lower rate for future utility bills. The proposal also has a retroactive feature that would make CHCC’s previous bills lesser, making it a loss that will be absorbed by CUC.

This, however, is still a sticking point and CUC is still weighing the merits of lowering CHCC’s rate. CUC chair Miranda V. Manglona stated that she wants a board member with a “fresh mind” to weigh in on this in a later meeting with CHCC’s board, which Holley agreed to attend with her.

Since April 17, 2014, CUC’s base rate, which is used to fund CUC operations, projects, and debt service, has not been increased and has remained at \$0.0210 per kilowatt-hour for 1 to 350 kWhs of power consumption for

residential customers. That goes up to \$0.1130 for commercial customers, and \$0.1240 for government accounts. This component of the CUC bill is different from the fuel adjustment clause rate, which is used to purchase fuel and goes up or down, depending on the price of fuel in the world market.

So far, CHCC has been doing well and has been diligently paying its monthly bill, according to CUC chief financial officer Greg Cruz. He said that CHCC has paid for its September and October power bill, and that CHCC is up to date with their payment, as mandated in an agreement that CUC recently inked with CHCC that became effective last September. “They have kept to their obligation... They lived up to their obligation... which was \$69,000,” said Cruz.

Additionally, he said that the Torres-Palacios administration—as it had promised—kicked in \$150,000 that foots part of the monthly bill of CHCC, representing payments for September and October. The administration has not requested an extension of when they will pay the

November tranche but, in the CUC-CHCC agreement, it states that payment should be made every eighth of the month.

Under the new agreement that became effective last Sept. 10, the central government will help CHCC pay CUC \$219,000 before the eighth of each month. The central government will fork out \$150,000; CHCC will foot the remaining \$69,000. Under the terms of the agreement, CUC reduced CHCC’s monthly obligation from \$250,000 a month to \$219,000 a month, which will go toward CHCC’s current monthly bills.

Furthermore, the \$219,000 payment will hold unless CHCC’s power consumption increases or there is a rate increase in the fuel adjustment clause. Should there be a decrease in FAC, CHCC will be able to pay less than \$69,000, but no less than \$60,000.

According to CUC director Gary Camacho CUC is a nonprofit and its funds come from the consumers who do pay their utility bills. Anything gained through the utility fees go to capital improvement projects.

EAD

From Page 1

lowed to work in the CNMI. Benavente explained that these individuals are technically in progress to becoming lawful permanent residents, or are in limbo of adjusting their status.

Benavente said only if the individual receives their green card before the PUA program expires or their status changes to one of the qualified alien statuses’ listed for PUA will they become eligible.

She also clarified the C11 EAD holders are qualified for PUA. According to USCIS, C11 are aliens paroled into the United States in the public interest or temporarily for emergency reasons.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services issues EADs to individuals who have a US nonimmigrant visa including asylee or refugee and their dependents, certain nationalities,

international students, eligible dependents of employees from international organizations, diplomatic missions, or NATO, employment-based nonimmigrants, family based nonimmigrant, and EAD applicant who has filed for an adjustment of status.

EADs who are ineligible for PUA but have received PUA benefits, like CNMI-Only Transitional Workers, must pay back the benefits they received.

Benavente said that DOL’s Benefit Payment Control Unit has been investigating applications of ineligible PUA recipients who received payments to determine if fraud was committed.

“They are assigned to investigate fraudulent activity or payments that have been made such as they are not U.S. citizens or an overpayment that was made to someone who mistakenly or purposely put down something that was incorrect. For the most part, when we contacted [ineligible recipients who

received PUA benefits], they come into our office and pay back the funds completely or have requested to pay back partial and the remaining on a payment plan,” she said.

Benavente said she wants to make it clear that DOL has not turned away any application, whether eligible or not. “We are mandated by USDOL to accept anyone and everyone so that we can determine whether they are eligible. We cannot turn away any applicant,” she said.

To date, CNMI DOL has collected over \$108,522.46 in PUA overpayments and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation overpayments from ineligible PUA recipients.

Claimants may call tel. 322-9943/9944 or email bpc.cnmidol@gmail.com to report fraud/overpayment. The BPC Unit will compile the information and if it is proven that the claimant has been overpaid, an appointment will be made with the claimant to arrange a repayment plan.

BABAUTA

From Page 1

11, 2021, which is the remaining term of Edwin K. Propst, who resigned as Precinct 1 representative last Oct. 1.

Come Jan. 11, in a first in CNMI history, Babauta will turn over the House office’s keys to his wife at the completion of his term.

Babauta’s wife, Celina, is a sure winner as Precinct 1 representative in the Nov. 3 general elections after getting the second highest number of votes, behind Propst, according to the Commonwealth Election Commission’s unofficial tabula-

tion results.

“In the military, we call it a change of command,” Celina said.

Last Wednesday, Veterans Day, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres appointed Babauta as representative for Election District 1, soon after House Speaker Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan) declared a vacancy when Propst resigned.

The governor said he appreciates Babauta’s willingness to serve in this role of providing representation for the people of Election District 1.

Babauta said he is happy with the appointment and he is ready to serve the community.

Babauta, who ran as an indepen-

dent candidate in 2018, landing in seventh place for Precinct 1 representative; there are only six House seats.

Babauta retired from DPS in August 2006 with a rank of deputy commissioner for administration.

In 2007, Babauta moved to Guam and joined the Guam Army National Guard. He was then deployed to Afghanistan.

He retired with a rank of lieutenant colonel with the U.S. Army in 2015. In the military, his last tour of duty was with the security forces advisory team in Afghanistan.

Babauta served as a lieutenant colonel in “Operation Enduring Freedom” in southern Afghanistan.

Stallion Battalion co-sponsors Tinian food bank

Cadets of the Tinian Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps helped raise funds for Tinian’s first and only food bank, the Ohala Foundation, last week’s Tuesday and Wednesday.

Working with the Tinian Jr. Sr. High School National Honor Society and Student Council student leaders, Stallion Battalion cadets assisted the foundation in a food and clothing drive at the Bank of Guam parking lot on Tinian on Nov. 3 and 4.

While most of the cadets were outside under the hot sun holding up signs and encouraging Tinian residents to donate, the rest of the cadets were inside the new Ohala Foundation Closet, fixing it up and organizing its contents (clothes, shoes, cosmetics, etc.) for customers.

Thanks to everyone’s cooperative efforts, the Ohala Foundation managed to raise over \$1,400 in just those two days. The money raised was used to purchase nonperishable food and other goods that were then handed out to Tinian residents for free.

“We would like to thank everyone who donated to or spread the word about the foundation. The Stallion Battalion is so glad to have co-sponsored an organization that works to help the people of Tinian. No matter the situation, we are always excited to help the Tinian community in any way we can,” said the Stallion Battalion in a statement.

Check out the Ohala Foundation website and Facebook page to see what amazing things they will do next! (*Samantha Sandbergen*)

LIGHTS

From Page 1

team and their collaboration with the Department of Public Works, Commonwealth Utilities Corp., and local contractors, Garapan Street is lit, and our famous Beach Road Pathway is getting brighter every week. This is an important part of our plans to make it safe for our people to walk in Garapan and on the pathway, while also preparing for our tourism reopening so that visitors are safe and comfortable,” said Torres.

A total of about 41 lights have been relit on Garapan Street, which runs from the Bank of Guam-DFS intersection on Beach Road to Chalan Pale Arnold (Middle Road).

For the Gov. Froilan C. Tenorio Beach Road Pathway, a total of 51 lights have been lit from Ada Gym to Quartermaster Road as of Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2020. Phase 2 of the relighting project will run from Quartermaster Road to the Cabrera Center, which should be completed within the next few days. Ultimately, these first phases of the Beach Road Pathway relighting project will stretch

to the Garapan Public Market and should be completed within November. Overall, 250 lights are scheduled to be relit for the public’s benefit on Saipan’s most famous walkway.

According to OGM administrator Epiphany E. Cabrera Jr., the relighting project has been an important priority of the governor and lieutenant governor to provide a sense of hope for the community this year.

“These relighting projects provide a sense of renewed hope for our community, and that is all we have ever talked about. ... Lighting is a little thing that goes a long way because it makes public places walkable and safer, while also improving tourism as we reopen our economy to our visitor markets. We are excited to completely finish these projects as we welcome the holiday season here in the Marianas,” said Cabrera.

Funding for the relighting projects is provided by federal funds administered under the Office of Grants Management. The Torres-Palacios administration is currently working with private sector leaders and non-profit organizations on Christmas decorations and lights around the main thoroughfares and roads of Garapan. (*PR*)

MCS

From Page 3

Dr. Mark A. Elgart, president and CEO of Cognia, said, “Cognia Accreditation is a rigorous process that focuses the entire school and its community on the primary goal of preparing lifelong learners in engaging environments where all students can flourish. Mount Carmel has demonstrated that it has continually met high standards and made progress on key indicators that impact student learning. Maintaining their accredited status for 25 years high-

lights a commitment to the quality and improvement of the education provided.”

Cognia is the parent organization of the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement, Northwest Accreditation Commission, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement. Parents and interested community members can learn more about the Cognia Accreditation at cognia.org

For more information about Mount Carmel School, visit www.mountcarmelsaipan.com. (*PR*)

Japanese group marks 35th anniversary of Katori Shrine revival

Members of the Japanese Society of the Northern Marianas and their families came together at the Sugar King Park last Nov. 7, to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the revival of the Saipan Katori Shrine in Garapan—an event that was also held online to allow the participation of guests in Japan.

The ceremony started at 11am and ended 11:45am. One of the unique aspects of this year's event was the presentation at the ceremony of amulets that had been prayed over at the Katori Shrine in Chiba, Japan. The amulets were prayed over to grant safety or good health and these were shipped to Saipan and presented at the ceremony to members of the Japanese Society of the Northern Marianas.

Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, representatives of the Katori Shrine in Chiba, who usually attend the event on Saipan, were unable to be here this year, which prompted the Japanese Society of the Northern Marianas to also hold the event via a remote ceremony, making it possible for Katori representatives to attend virtually.

Among those who joined the ceremony on Saipan were Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang, Japan Consul Kazuhiko

Ono, Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo, former Marianas Visitors Bureau managing director J.M. Guerrero and his wife, and members of the Japanese Society of the Northern Marianas.

"The annual Katori Shrine Ceremony and the Autumn Festival have always been the highlight events every October [on] Saipan, enjoyed by hundreds of visitors and residents of Saipan. The ceremony this year is clearly a variation of how past ones were held," said Apatang in his speech. "But no matter the environment we find ourselves in, it is how faithful we are in performing the ceremony that truly counts."

People who attended the ceremony viewed old photos of the time when the Saipan Katori Shrine was being rebuilt and current photos of the Katori Shrine in Japan.

Takeshi Katori, chief priest of the Katori Shrine in Chiba, Japan, also sent a message. "Over the years, we highly appreciate your generous support, not only from Japanese people but also local dignities. We hope Saipan recovers from this difficult time as fast as possible and people go back to normal life."

The Katori Shrine in Chiba is the one of the oldest and is a high-grade shrine in Japan. The shrine contributes to the strong ties between the people of the CNMI and Japan. (PR)

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the Japanese Society of the Northern Marianas and their families pose for a commemorative photo at the Sugar King Park in Garapan after a ceremony that celebrated the 35th anniversary of the Saipan Katori Shrine Revival last Nov. 7. To support the event, the Marianas Visitors Authority provided tents, chairs, and drinks.



Halegua says \$160 hourly rate reasonable

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

Responding to Gold Mantis Construction Decoration (CNMI) LLC, which balked at the \$160 hourly rate for legal interns, lawyer Aaron Halegua said that rate is reasonable because the legal



Halegua

interns have received some form of legal training.

He explained that the higher rates make sense because summer law interns, unlike some paralegals, have received at least some formal legal training.

He added that the attorney's fees being requested are reasonable and the work performed was not duplicative.

"Gold Mantis does not provide any details as to how it arrived at the 25% figure, nor does it cite any case law or legal authority in support of this request," Halegua said.

He said despite having access to the plaintiffs' motion to compel against IPI, and the corresponding fee petition and time sheets, Gold Mantis does not identify a single actual time entry or specific part of a brief that is arguably duplicative.

Halegua said Gold Mantis' argument is unpersuasive.

In addition, Halegua also asked the court to award him additional fees for over

five hours preparing for the reply brief.

Halegua wants additional fees for preparing his reply to Gold Mantis' opposition to his clients' request for attorney's fees in the amount of \$30,517.80.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, Halegua recently asked District Court for the NMI to award his clients attorney's fee in connection with their motion against Gold Mantis.

Gold Mantis opposed the \$160 hourly rate for two law student interns and wants the attorney's fees reduced by 25%. The request for attorney's fees includes Halegua's rate of \$400 per hour; co-counsel Bruce Berline's \$300 per hour; and the \$160 per-hour rate for two law student interns who performed legal research and other work regarding the lawsuit.

Halegua, who is from New York, represents seven construction workers who are suing Gold Mantis, MCC International Saipan Ltd. Co. and Imperial Pacific International, LLC over labor and other violations.

The seven workers are Tianming Wang, Dong Han, Yongjun Meng, Liangcai Sun, Youli Wang, Qingchun Xu, and Duxin Yan.

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Nicole Babauta,
CNMI SBDC
Director/ Business
Advisor

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BANK OF HAWAII

SMALL BUSINESS REVITALIZATION GRANT MONEY SMART SEMINAR

FREE OF CHARGE

WHEN: Wednesday,
November 18, 2020

TIME: 5:00PM -
7:00PM

PRESENTED BY:



Desiree M. Braga,
Vice President
Private Banking,
Bank of Hawaii

In this workshop, Bank of Hawaii Vice President/Relationship Manager Private Banking, Desiree M. Braga, will provide an overview about the Bank of Hawaii Small Business Revitalization Grant Program.

We would be discussing the following:
BOH Grant Application
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NMI DOL to process remaining PUA claims

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Department of Labor assures the community that they will be able to adjudicate the thousands of remaining Pandemic Unemployment Assistance claims before the program's expiration on Dec. 31.

According to Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente, the Hire Marianas online portal shows that there are about 28,000 PUA claims that remain to be adjudicated but only about half of that number need actual adjudication.

"Let me clarify that those numbers are coming from our online portal, which could include applications from Palau, Guam, and from CNMI, because we're on the

same sort of a network, and so we've had to vet those out. So I would say, accurately, it's about less than half of those claims that have yet to be adjudicated," she said.

Benavente assures that DOL can adjudicate the majority of them.

"Now that we know the system a lot better, and we know the issues a lot, we're more familiar with what people's challenges are as far as answering the questions," she said.

Benavente clarified that the number could be even lower than half of 28,000 because it's not necessarily applicants but claim issues. For example, one applicant could have many issues that would also need to be adjudicated.

Last call for small business group health care plan available by Jan.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is currently accepting Chamber members into their SCC health care group plan with TakeCare Insurance Co., Inc. Small businesses, non-profits, and entrepreneurs are welcome to join the group, as the rates create more affordable access to health care for many of our small and mighty entities in the CNMI.

More information about rates and the SCC group plan can be found at www.saipan-chamber.com/healthcare. Please fill out the online form on the page if you are interested in more information, and the SCC staff will follow-up with your inquiries. For members intending to sign up for the SCC group plan, open enrollment will be from Nov. 30 to Dec. 11, with a start date for the program on Jan. 1, 2020.

The SCC is excited to announce that sole-proprietors are also now able to avail of

"There are claimants that have four or five issues. So that could be one payment with five issues or 10 issues. It really depends if their application was processed in a way that blocks them from moving forward to the payment cycle. So that's why it looks like a lot but does that mean 28,000 applicants? No. It means thousands of applicants have several thousand issues," she said.

Benavente said DOL will reopen face-to-face services on Dec. 1 to give them ample time to carry out adjudication.

"We'd be closed for 45 days, because we want to adjudicate all of those issues out of there and get the applicants their benefits as quickly as possible" she said.

Benavente said DOL currently has

close to 100 personnel working adjudication but they have been getting help from other government agencies in terms of manpower. "I can't say I wish I had more, because I'm looking at the limitations of our budget, our administrative costs, as granted by U.S. Department of Labor. We were allowed to hire this much with this amount of money. And so what I'm grateful for is that many of our department agencies are lending us their personnel, so I'm borrowing them so that they can help us out. I'm really grateful for that," she said.

When it comes to adjudication, Benavente said it could take up to an hour to adjudicate one claim.

the SCC group plan for 2021.

The SCC group plan is available to the following:

- Chamber members in good member standing (up-to-date on membership dues).

- Businesses with at least one subscriber.

- Entities will need to meet other qualifications such as percent of staff enrolled in the program. Fill out the form at www.saipan-chamber.com/healthcare, and the SCC staff will confirm your eligibility.

SCC is a non-profit organization whose mission is to empower our enterprises as a resource, advocate, and connector for Saipan's private sector. For more information about the SCC Group Program or to learn how to become a Chamber member, visit online at www.saipan-chamber.com, call 234-7150, or visit the fourth floor of the Marianas Business Plaza (Room 413). (PR)

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2020

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DIAMOND G CALROSE RICE 50#  \$29⁹⁹	ACE OF DIAMONDS TUNA 7oz  \$1⁴⁹ ea.	KIKKOMAN SOY SAUCE 1.8 LTR  \$4⁴⁹ ea.	JOETEN HAND SANITIZER FLIP TOP 100ml  99¢ ea.	JOETEN BUTANE GAS 4pk  \$2⁹⁹

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FOLGERS SINGLES REG COFFEE 19ct  \$6⁵⁹	GENERAL M BUGLES NACHO CHS 7.5z  \$2⁹⁹	GENERAL M BUGLES ORIGINAL 7.5oz  \$2⁹⁹	GENERAL M COOKIE CRISPS 10.6oz  \$5⁵⁹	GENERAL M LUCKY CHARMS 10.5oz  \$5⁵⁹	

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Opinion

Hafa Adair

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXX, Issue No. 226

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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EDITORIAL

Vaccine news is promising but not a COVID 'cure'

The welcome news that a COVID-19 vaccine now under development appears to be far more effective than initially hoped is a much-needed burst of good news as the pandemic gathers force across the nation.

But the announcement does not mean it's time to cast aside face masks or other precautions. Nor is it accurate to say that COVID is now "cured," as Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, irresponsibly posted on Twitter.

The positive results shared by Pfizer are encouraging but come with important caveats. One is that the numbers aren't final. While the pharmaceutical giant says its vaccine is more than 90% effective in preventing COVID in those who haven't been infected, these are interim results. The trial remains ongoing.

It's also important to understand that a COVID vaccine, when it becomes available, will prevent the disease in those who haven't been infected. But it's not a treatment for those who are severely ill with it or those who have been infected and potentially face long-term complications.

In addition, Pfizer's data was shared via a news release instead of in a more rigorously reviewed medical journal. Still, the early data is promising, and the company "plans to ask the Food and Drug Administration for emergency authorization of the two-dose vaccine later this month," The New York Times reported. The company estimated that it will have manufactured enough vaccine by January to immunize 15 million to 20 million people.

In the meantime, Minnesota's Michael Osterholm is warning that the nation is "about to enter COVID hell." Disease metrics here and elsewhere back him up. Daily cases nationwide topped 130,000 this week, a 14-day change of 64%, according to The New York Times' COVID tracker. Deaths rose 18% over the same period.

Osterholm, who heads the University of Minnesota's Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy, was named to President-elect Joe Biden's COVID task force earlier this week. The advisory group includes other respected scientists and public health experts. The Trump task force should cooperate with the new Biden group. The nation needs the new team to get a running start. The Trump administration also shouldn't give up fighting the virus during the transition.

The best defense for individuals remains the low-tech tools of social distancing, face masks, hygiene, limiting family gatherings and getting tested right away if you develop symptoms.

The Pfizer vaccine's early success enhances the value of these commonsense safeguards. This is no longer just about spacing out infections to prevent maxing out hospital capacity. Instead, buckling down until there's a vaccine could stop people from getting infected altogether. That's important when many COVID survivors, even those with mild

See COVID on Next Page



What happens to the other vaccines now?

A vaccine created by Pfizer and partner BioNTech won the race to prove efficacy in a large trial. But is it the best vaccine of the dozens being tested? If it isn't, will any slower but better vaccines have a chance?

A press release this week claims the vaccine is 90% effective at preventing symptomatic COVID-19. That would mean nearly all of those infections happened in people who got a placebo rather than the vaccine.

The trial isn't over. It was slated to stop after 164 people of the 44,000 volunteers developed symptoms and tested positive for the virus, but an independent board was allowed to peek at the data early. They waited until they were up to 94 infections to share the preliminary news, according to an article in the medical website STATnews.

As promising as the announcement sounded, a critical question wasn't answered: Does the vaccine prevent people from getting the infection and spreading it to others, or merely prevent symptoms? In experiments in which animals were deliberately exposed, some vaccine candidates did prevent infection, while others did not.

That makes an enormous difference, since vaccines are usually least likely to work in those who need them most—people whose immune systems are not working correctly because of their age or health problems. A vaccine that prevents younger, healthier people from transmitting the disease would save more lives by indirectly protecting those people through herd immunity. Safety will matter too—people might not agree to get a vaccine if there's even a perception of serious side effects or incomplete safety testing.

This creates a big ethical puzzle. After it's clear a drug or vaccine is working, it's traditionally considered unethical to continue to give a clinical trial volunteers a placebo.

Another unanswered question is whether it will be possible to continue clinical trials of other vaccines. And if one later proves better than the front-runner, will it be safe to use it on people who've already had a vaccine with more modest benefits?

"The big discussion now is how we make the vaccine available without losing the data we need," says immunologist Florian Krammer of the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. How scientists solve that problem will determine when a vaccine is ready to be rolled out. Even before full scale approval, the FDA can fast track vaccines through so-called emergency use authorization, which could be issued for the Pfizer vaccine before the end of this month.

"What's being discussed now is whether an emergency use authorization of the first vaccines will make it more difficult

By **FAYE FLAM**
Bloomberg Opinion

Faye Flam is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist. She has written for the Economist, the New York Times, the Washington Post, Psychology Today, Science and other publications. She has a degree in geophysics from the California Institute of Technology. For more articles like this, please visit us at [bloomberg.com/opinion](https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion)



for other vaccines to complete clinical trials," says Harvard researcher Dan Barouch, the co-creator of a different vaccine being manufactured by Johnson & Johnson and being tested in 60,000 people.

On the one hand, an EUA could prevent thousands of deaths. On the other, even more deaths could be prevented over the long haul by gathering enough data to get the safest, most effective vaccines out there.

Pfizer's front-runner vaccine is one of two leading candidates based on a new technology that uses messenger RNA—a nucleic acid, like DNA. It sounds a lot scarier than it is, say the experts. The RNA can't affect the genes in your cells. And its effect on the body is minimal compared to getting the virus. An infection hijacks all your cellular machinery and repurposes it toward making more virus, while the RNA would prompt cells to make one small part of the virus, stimulating the immune system to create antibodies that will attack the real thing if it's encountered.

Rheumatologist Arthur Krieg, founder of Checkmate pharmaceuticals, isn't worried that the unprecedented speed would hurt a vaccine's safety. "What they changed was to dramatically accelerate the review and decision-making process, allowing trials to go much more rapidly than they normally would," he says. "But we're not really making a sacrifice in safety as far as I can see."

In past vaccine trials, the vast majority of side effects occurred within the first two months of participants getting the shots, and most within the first two weeks, Arthur Krieg says. Pfizer should have that safety data by the third week in November, when they have two months of follow-up on at least half of the participants.

Still, the whole vaccine quest could be derailed by even the perception of danger. Once enough people are getting a vaccine, some will inevitably get various severe illnesses for reasons that have nothing to do with the vaccine. The scare that wrongly as-

See VACCINES on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

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Here we go again: A contemptible elite keeps trying to kill Obamacare, even during a pandemic

It's a big country, and unless you've been infected or know someone who has, unless you know someone who died from the disease caused by the coronavirus, unless you've lost your job because of the pandemic, it might still be hard to comprehend.

One of life's challenges is having empathy for those we do not know and cannot see and, in our COVID isolation, even with news organizations telling this horrible story each day, it's hard to see the people represented in the numbers.

But the numbers say we are in a bad place.

Let this sink in: As of Tuesday morning, the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University confirmed 10,111,077 cases in the United States, with deaths at 238,256 since the start of the pandemic. Over the last week, about one in 400 Americans tested positive. The disease is spreading again and more will surely die.

Meanwhile, the economic recovery could falter and leave millions out of work longer and without the health insurance they had through their jobs. Let this sink in: Up to 165,000 workers in Maryland alone might have lost their insurance because of the pandemic, according to the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange. Starting in March, at least half that number signed up for some form of subsidized insurance through the exchange. If not for the exchange—and for the federal law known as Obamacare that made it possible—where would those 80,000 people be? They'd have no access to affordable care.

And yet, in the midst of the worst health crisis in 100 years, the Trump administration, wealthy Republicans, think-tankers and 18 attorneys general want the Supreme Court to deprive some 30 million Americans of health insurance.

If you thought the Supreme Court had settled the question of the Affordable Care Act's constitutionality in 2012, you underestimated the tenacity, amorality and financial resources of the

law's opponents. Their tired argument is that the government has no place in mandating, funding or arranging health insurance for people who cannot afford it on their own.

I will put aside the philosophical argument that, in the United States, we should act for the common welfare, that our taxes should fund a good society, including a comprehensive and effective health care infrastructure that leaves no one sick or bankrupt.

If that's too touchy-feely for you, I will go the commonsense route: Even before the virus arrived, we had a health care crisis in the United States, with around 50 million people uninsured. Everyone who had insurance was, in some way, paying for those who could not afford it—up to an average of \$1,100 a year in our premiums. We have been over this ground so many times, it hardly bears repeating: When the uninsured get sick and walk into a hospital for treatment, the hospital treats them and passes the cost along to the rest of us.

So I have never understood conservative opposition to the idea of paying a little more in taxes to have a system that covers everyone and, eventually, saves the rest of us (and our employers) some money. It also makes no sense that Medicare is reserved for older Americans when, if we planned it correctly, we could have a single-payer system for everyone. It's infuriating to hear older Americans oppose the ACA while they walk around with Medicare cards.

But, as much as I like arguing for it, I won't even go to "Medicare for All." I believe we will get there some day. I believe the nation would like to see a transition to it, but in the kind of increments that progressives hate.

Messaging is a problem. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, too many Americans—including 67% of those who want to see a single-payer system—believe they'll be able to keep their current insurance plan under Medicare for All. The bigger problem is that not enough Americans grasp the trade-

By **DAN RODRICKS**

The Baltimore Sun



Dan Rodricks is a long-time columnist for The Baltimore Sun.

offs: slightly higher taxes for lower out-of-pocket expenses.

Kaiser has been polling and examining polling data on this for years. In October, the nonpartisan foundation released a summary, finding what you'd expect: Democrats and independents overwhelmingly favor a national Medicare for All plan while most Republicans oppose it. Like everything else, the concept is fraught with partisan politics. Bernie Sanders did a great job explaining how it would work, but apparently not enough Republicans were listening.

In the meantime, Kaiser polling found more popularity for what President-elect Joe Biden has in mind—building on the ACA in order to expand coverage and reduce costs. He wants to include a public insurance option, like Medicare, for those who want it. That makes the most sense for now.

But Republicans have no interest in improving the ACA, and there will be nothing to build on if the conservatives prevail at the Supreme Court. Not only will millions lose coverage, not only will states lose billions of federal dollars for Medicaid for people of lower income, but the elements of the ACA that are most popular—coverage for those with preexisting conditions, family plan coverage for your kids up until age 26—will be scrapped.

It's stunning, contemptible and unconscionable that a conservative elite of Americans keeps trying to take health insurance from lower-income Americans, and even during a pandemic. Let that sink in.

VACCINES

From Page 8

sociated autism with childhood vaccines came about that way.

Mount Sinai's Krammer says he has high hopes that a vaccine could end the pandemic, even though he thinks it's unlikely to eradicate the virus. What he expects is that eventually a vaccine will make COVID-19 milder and less common. If it's not severe and there's very little of it, then it doesn't matter, he says, and we're basically back to normal.

This week's news is promising for other vaccines. One being developed by Moderna also uses messenger RNA, and most of the others are, one way or another, aimed at producing antibodies to the so-called spike protein, which the virus uses to get into cells. Eleven vaccine candidates are in late-stage testing and a number of other promising vaccines aren't far behind. It's an abundance that's never happened in the history of vaccines. Balancing urgency with research ethics and the longer-term need for data won't be easy. But so much rides on getting it right.

COVID

From Page 8

infections, report troubling symptoms such as fatigue, shortness of breath, joint pain and memory lapses months afterward.

The encouraging news from Pfizer, as well as the promising progress made by other companies developing COVID vaccines, is a reminder of the remarkable work underway by the world's doctors and scientists. They merit our gratitude as the finish line looms. The best way to thank them: taking individual actions, such as wearing a mask and restricting family gatherings, to stop COVID from gaining even more strength.

Trump's staying power

Pending the outcome in a few key states, Donald Trump may be leaving the White House, but he's not exiting the room.

The fiercest Never Trump critics hoped for—and wishfully predicted—a cleansing landslide that would wipe out every trace of Trump and his enablers from the GOP.

That's not happening. Trump's poll- and pundit-defying surge toward the cusp of a second term vindicates Trump's approach enough to give him and his potential successors continued traction, if not a dominant voice, in the party.

Trump's possible loss is nothing like the shellacking the GOP experienced in 2008, when Barack Obama won in a landslide together with a 60-seat Senate majority.

Trump's party has a chance to retain its Senate majority and will pick up House seats, while the margin of his own defeat may be a whisker in the Blue Wall states, just as his margin of victory in 2016 was a whisker.

He did his own side the inadvertent favor of perhaps buffering it from the worst consequences of his own possible loss—first, by filling the Ruth Bader Ginsburg seat on the Supreme Court that otherwise would have fallen to Joe Biden, and by performing well enough to aid the cause of Republican Senate candidates, who will check a Biden presidency from the outset if they do indeed manage to hold the majority.

Trump's voters were still there for him—in fact, more so than ever. His tack of doubling down on his base wasn't quite as insane as we were always told by commentators. His strong close proved his power as a campaigner, with his signature madcap rallies serving as effective organizing and messaging vehicles.

This is not to deny that Trump's own failings helped sink him. There are a thousand pitfalls he could have avoided if he weren't so self-involved and undisciplined. No single one of them made the difference, but cumulatively they blighted his presidency and made him radioactive in the suburbs.

No one should want to repeat them, and the party should never

By **RICH LOWRY**

King Features Synd., Inc.



Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

again get behind such a flawed personal figure.

Nevertheless, Trump points to a viable GOP future. He posted startling gains among Latino voters. This shows it's possible to imagine a working-class-oriented Republican Party that isn't a demographic dead end, but genuinely crosses racial lines, even if this potential is still inchoate.

Given how Trump's base showed up massively in the past two presidential elections, it's also unlikely that these voters are going to be jettisoned anytime soon by some other Republican presidential candidate. Indeed, the education- and class-based resorting of the GOP—affluent suburbs peeling off and working-class voters coming on board—predated Trump.

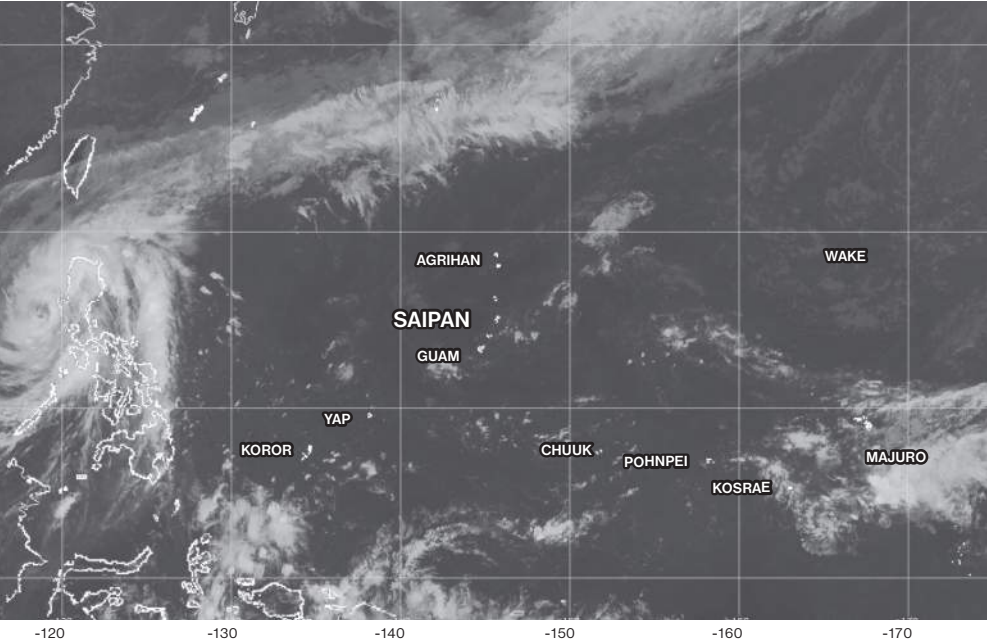
The concerns of these voters have to figure prominently in the agenda of the GOP going forward. That doesn't require embracing any particular Trump policy, but it does mean the party will inevitably have a populist coloration.

Trump will remain an outsize presence. His supporters will still consider him a legendary warrior, a totem of resistance to the media and the cultural elite. His endorsements will continue to be valuable, and ambitious 2024 candidates will seek to inherit his mantle.

Trump might not win the biggest, most important prize of a second term in 2020, but there's no doubt he has staved off political irrelevance.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY		TUESDAY	
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.		Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	
88°	78°	88°	78°	87°	77°	87°	77°	88°	78°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 6:50 AM, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Partly cloudy skies, isolated showers and moderate to fresh trade winds are present across the Marianas waters. Seas are running 5 to 7 feet at the buoys.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html>
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
 - Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
 - Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20

seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mp and, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html> and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°	
Palau	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°	
Yap	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:17 AM	5:44 PM
Saturday	6:18 AM	5:44 PM
Sunday	6:18 AM	5:44 PM
Monday	6:19 AM	5:44 PM
Tuesday	6:19 AM	5:44 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	3:56 AM	4:13 PM	-
Saturday	4:57 AM	5:00 PM	-
Sunday	5:59 AM	5:00 PM	-
Monday	7:04 AM	6:45 PM	-
Tuesday	8:09 AM	7:42 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Showers	64° / 57°	
Beijing	Sunny	46° / 25°	
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	79° / 72°	
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	83° / 73°	
London	Cloudy	54° / 48°	
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	76° / 57°	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	90° / 77°	
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	84° / 59°	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	80° / 72°	
New York	Mostly Sunny	49° / 39°	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	59° / 45°	
Paris	Mostly Sunny	50° / 41°	
Busan	Partly Cloudy	63° / 39°	
Rome	Partly Cloudy	61° / 48°	
Salem	Sunny	66° / 42°	
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	58° / 50°	
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	43° / 25°	
Tokyo	Cloudy	59° / 46°	
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	52° / 36°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
5:51 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.67	
11:48 AM	LOW TIDE	0.39	
5:53 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.99	
-	-	-	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 1, 2020

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	6:55am	7:35am	1, 4, 6	UA174	5:10am	5:51am	1, 4, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	6:55am	9:50pm	1 via Guam	UA184/174	10:40pm	5:51am+1	3, 5 via Guam

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 5	UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	1, 3, 5

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (*The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.*)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 8, 2020

SAIPAN TO ROTA				ROTA TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri	3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri	3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Mon/Wed/Fri	3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Mon/Wed/Fri

ROTA TO GUAM				GUAM TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable	4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable	2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily	2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily	2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Temporarily Unavailable	2104	10:30	10:45	Temporarily Unavailable
				2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
				2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
				2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
				2108	14:30	14:45	Temporarily Unavailable
				2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
				2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
				2111	17:30	17:45	Temporarily Unavailable
				2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

US Air Force fixes only weather radar system in Guam



Members of the 36th Operation Support Squadron Radar, Airfield, & Weather Systems use a crane to repair the Next-Generation Radar in Yigo, Guam. The waveguide is a 100-foot tube of pressurized air, which allows signals to pass between the station below and the radar above.

U.S. AIR FORCE/STAFF SGT. MATTHEW HAWKINS

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam—The 36th Operation Support Squadron's Radar, Airfield & Weather System technicians recently repaired the klystron, a power source for the antenna amplifier, on the Next-Generation Radar system in Guam.

The NEXRAD, used by the U.S. National Weather Service, is the sole weather radar for Guam and the CNMI, making it vital to the safety and wellbeing of the islands' people.

"We normally make small repairs like this," said Staff Sgt. Matthew Hawkins, NCO in charge of 36th OSS RAWs. "We've replaced transmitters, fixed motors that rotate the radar, and amplifiers over the last couple of months. It's the

bigger jobs we aren't normally asked to cover."

One of these bigger jobs was the repair and maintenance of the NEXRAD waveguide, a 100-foot tube, which holds pressurized air to enable the electrical signal to transfer from the station below to the radar above. The tube is delicate and normally requires climbing gear to work on. Technicians from the NWS Radar Operations Center, based in the United States, would normally travel to Guam to make such repairs.

"The waveguide had been having trouble for nearly two years," said James Colson, airspace manager assigned to the 36th Operations Group. "Our guys would do patch jobs while we tried to get ROC out

here, but between exercises, and then COVID, they just couldn't make it out."

On March 25, the waveguide was leaking pressure to a degree where it needed to be replaced. Without a working waveguide, the radar was non-functioning. It was then that Lt. Col. Brian Neal, 36th OSS commander, decided his team would tackle the challenge.

This job was outside of the normal knowledge base for RAWs, and they worked remotely with the ROC to troubleshoot the issue. Eight airmen worked in two-man

teams, night and day, to get the critical weather system operational, which brought about unforeseeable issues for the teams to overcome.

"One setback we ran into was the climbing gear," said Hawkins. "The climbing mounts don't all adhere to Air Force safety guidance. That's why we contacted CE [civil engineering] to use one of their cranes."

With the assistance of the crane, the RAWs technicians were able to repair the waveguide in less than 72 hours and were awarded decora-

tions for their effort.

"Having a working radar is a big deal," said Capt. Matthew Wetmore, 36th OSS weather flight commander. "Without it, we rely on satellites, but satellites don't give us three important data points: precipitation, lightning, and wind speed."

All three factors are critical to how the Air Force operates on the flightline. Heavy rain lowers visibility, wind speeds affect take-offs and landings, and lightning puts aircraft and personnel in danger. Satellite imagery can help forecast these conditions, but, with the radar, those predictions become more accurate.

"It's the difference between saying it might rain within the hour or 30 minutes, or it'll rain in this five-minute window," said Wetmore.

For eight months, the 36th OSS RAWs maintained the radar system much to the appreciation of the local community, military missions, and island chain. This radar is even more important to an island with no surface stations to relay what the weather is like over the Pacific Ocean. Without the NEXRAD, the island people wouldn't know what the weather was until it was happening. *(36th Wing Public Affairs)*



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REGULAR BOARD MEETING NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Marianas Visitors Authority hereby gives notice that a **Regular Board of Directors Meeting** will be held on **Tuesday November 17, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.** in the MVA's Conference Room, Saipan, MP 96950

MEETING AGENDA

- 1) **Preliminary Matters**
 - a. Call to Order
 - b. Roll Call
 - c. Adoption of Agenda
 - d. Adoption of Minutes
 - i. Special Board Meeting – November 4, 2020
- 2) **Public Comments**
- 3) **Committee Reports**
 1. Finance Committee
 - a. Fund Status Report
- 4) **Executive Session**
- 5) **Miscellaneous/Announcements**
- 6) **Adjournment**

/s/Gloria Cavanagh

Acting Chairperson, MVA Board of Directors



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID ITB NO.: DPW21-ITB-003

SUBMISSION DATE: December 2, 2020 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"Route 35 (Chalan Tun Herman Pan) Improvements Project No. TQ-THS-0035 (301), Saipan"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

The project package will be available on or after **October 30, 2020** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **November 17, 2020**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Public Works Conference Room 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center Office, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **November 24, 2020** to **Ms. Lorraine Seman, Acting Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ PETER P. CAMACHO
ACTING SECRETARY, DPW

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, PROCUREMENT SERVICES



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality
Division of Coastal Resources Management
P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-8300; Fax: (670) 664-8315
www.dcrm.gov.mp



Janice E. Castro
Director, DCRM

Public Notice

From the COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
of the CNMI'S DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

DATE: November 13, 2020

NOTICE: The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ) Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) is currently reviewing a federal consistency determination from the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the proposed rule for the National Performance Standards for Discharges Incidental to the Normal Operation of a Commercial Vessel. More information about the proposed activity can be accessed via the DCRM website at: [https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/National-Consistency-Determination-Letter Vessel-Incidental-Discharge-Act-1.pdf](https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/National-Consistency-Determination-Letter-Vessel-Incidental-Discharge-Act-1.pdf).

Federal consistency is a provision of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) that requires federal actions that affect the coastal zone to be consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of a coastal state's federally approved coastal management plan.

Comments on whether the project is consistent with the enforceable policies of the CNMI's coastal management program can be submitted to the Division of Coastal Resources Management at fedcon@dcrm.gov.mp.

This public notice has been published for compliance with 15 CFR § 930.42. DCRM is soliciting public comments for fifteen (15) days, starting on November 12, 2020 and ending on November 27, 2020. We welcome your feedback and thank you for your consideration.



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID ITB NO.: DPW21-ITB-004

SUBMISSION DATE: December 29, 2020 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"Route 36 (Windward/Chalan Kalabera) Road Improvements, Phase II, Saipan"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **November 24, 2020**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Public Works Conference Room 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center Office, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **December 16, 2020** to **Ms. Lorraine M. Seman, Acting Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ JAMES A. ADA
SECRETARY, DPW

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR,
DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICE



Tech. Sgt. Michael Britt, assigned to the 36th Operation Support Squadron Radar, Airfield, & Weather Systems, works on removing the waveguide from the Next-Generation Radar in Yigo, Guam.

U.S. AIR FORCE/STAFF SGT. MATTHEW HAWKINS

Special Feature

Editor's Note: The Governor's Council of Economic Advisers' Public Private Partnership initiative has drawn widespread support from the community. Various activities have been conducted and projects have been launched to rally behind the destination enhancement campaign. This section will provide insights on how PPP supporters are committed to the program.



The Pau Pau Beach Park's restroom will soon be ready for public use, with the E-Land Group making a substantial progress in its rehabilitation work at the facility.

Lindsay Ahn, manager of Corporate Social Responsibility of E-Land/Micronesians Resort, Inc., said they cleaned the restroom area to begin the ground work, while old and worn-out facilities like the urinal, sink, and pipes were replaced. The whole facility was repainted, while a fence and gate were installed, along with new doors for each restroom stall.

The public restroom, which has been deteriorating and out of order for many years, was identified as a priority project under E-Land's site upgrade plan for the Pau Pau Beach Park. E-Land, which operates Kensington Hotel, Coral Ocean Golf Resort, and Pacific Islands Club



Saipan, adopted the park in 2016 and reaffirmed its commitment to the site this year by joining the Public Private Partnership initiative of the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers, which aims to foster a collaboration between the government and the private sector on a destination enhancement campaign in the CNMI.

As part of its commitment, E-Land did a facility assessment at the Pau

Pau Beach Park last August. The following month, they coordinated with the Parks and Recreation Division and the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to map out the scope of the rehabilitation work at the restroom.

Then in October, the restroom went through a facelift with the facility's various features replaced and secured. E-Land will do a few more final touches to the restroom rehabilitation

project before reopening the facility later this month, according to Ahn.

"We will be conducting regular monitoring and maintenance work after we reopen the public restroom, while cleanup drives at the Pau Pau Beach Park will be held often," Ahn said.

Last month, more than 20 Kensington Hotel Saipan employees volunteered to pick up trash along the

shores of the Pau Pau Beach Park and its surrounding areas.

"Every volunteer was happy to put in the work and contribute to a good cause—helping keep our beaches, park, and community safe and clean," Anh said.

E-Land is working on installing more recycling bins at the Pau Pau Beach Park to accommodate more trash, especially on weekends when people gather at the As Matuis site. The company will also install signage to deter littering and encourage the responsible use of the public facilities.

"We will keep our eyes and ears open to what our community needs and strive to incorporate these ideas into a development plan for the enhancement of CNMI parks and tourist sites," said Brian Shin, chief executive officer of E-Land/Micronesians Resort, Inc. (PR)



Business

Cutting Solutions LLC: diversity in business



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Established two months ago, Cutting Solutions LLC aims to fill the needs of the community whether they are imported goods, house construction, and woodwork.

By **BEA CABRERA**
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Running three businesses at the same time is possible, but it takes a special team to make it work and that's how Cutting Solutions LLC president Derek Cutting and vice president Tanya Cutting bask in the demands that come with the journey. Cutting Solutions LLC, is an umbrella company for different businesses—Cutting Estates, an import business and real estate company; and Cutting Creations, a woodwork and resin art company.

"First is the import business borne out of a need or want on the island and we bring in goods to fill that need. There is no store front at this time to keep my overhead down so I pre-sell all the items before they arrive and as soon as the container is here, the customers can pick them up immediately... I did a lot of research to find a brand, Dirtbike, that will perform well but also last for the most affordable price I could find...My goal is to pre-sell the entire container before it arrives since I do not have room for storage," said Derek Cutting.

"In reference to the container of dirt bikes and beach pop-up tents, we initially just wanted to buy a dirt bike for my 4-year-old son. I asked a few friends if they wanted to order as well and the list

quickly got out of hand. This is when I saw a demand for child- and teen-friendly dirt bikes and ATVs especially with the new agreement of Cow Town being awarded to Marianas Motocross Association and with Christmas around the corner, we're the cherry on top!" he added.

The other license under Cutting Solutions LLC is a real estate business named Cutting Estates, which aims to build homes that are built to last, good to look at, and would withstand natural elements that come its way. "For the real estate side, I've been working on this plan for about four years now and finally pulled the trigger to move forward. This is another project I am working on to build and provide aesthetically pleasing and affordable homes for local residents. Being in the imports side plays a part in this as well," Cutting said.

"We are currently working on a two-storey, three-bedroom, and two-bedroom concept full concrete house which has an option to add in a carport. The design is beautiful and very thought out in terms of using all the available space...I have partnered with a well-established local construction company and since I am new in construction, I run around all day to Zoning, to the properties, to meetings, etc.," Cutting added.

The third business is Cutting's Creations where they

create handmade custom pieces. "I've recently found a passion for woodworking and resin art using local wood. Examples are wood and epoxy resin furniture tables and decorative pieces. My wife also creates beautiful diaper cakes and decorations for parties," Cutting said.

Cutting Solutions LLC, is a young company, established just two months ago. "Running different businesses only works if you build solid teams. Our staff that runs all the day-to-day operations of Cutting

Solutions and our other business, Latte Built gyms, are really the champions! Without them I wouldn't be able to balance much of family time or anything else," Cutting said.

"Cutting Solutions LLC isn't a traditional 9am-5pm operation. I'm working on projects constantly. For the imports, I take Facebook messages and phone calls all hours of the day for the sales. Once payment is made, I send the buyer their receipt," Cutting added.

For more information, send



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Owner Derek Cutting enjoys creating art out of local wood.

them a message on Facebook "Cutting Solutions LLC" or send them an email "Cutting Solutions LLC" and at CuttingSolutionsLLC@Instagram "Cutting Solutions" gmail.com

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ATTORNEY FOR Administrator

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In re Estate of GEORGE A. MANGLONA, Deceased. CIVIL ACTION NO. 97-1061

EIGHTH AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on March 11, 2009, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of the Estate of George A. Manglona in and to the following property:

Legal description of the property:
(1) Lot 001 T 22, situated in Tinian, Northern Mariana Islands; and
(2) Lot 008 T 85, situated in Tinian, Northern Mariana Islands.

Total area of the property:
(1) Lot 001 T 22 contains an area of 1,488 square meters, more or less.
(2) Lot 008 T 85 contains an area of 901 square meters.

Known encumbrances:
(1) Lot 001 T 22 is subject to outstanding mortgages, the balances due on which are negotiable.
(2) Lot 008 T 85 is a leasehold estate, which expires on July 21, 2047. No further rent is due.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale.
The sale will be held on Friday, December 4, 2020, at the hour of 1:30 p.m. Copies of a title insurance report for the properties are available to any prospective bidder upon request.

Terms and Conditions of Sale.
The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 4th day of November, 2020:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

COMMONWEALTH LAW REVISION COMMISSION
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS JUDICIARY
House of Justice • Guma Hubella • Tinian Avenue
P.O. Box 500179, Saipan, MP 96950-2179 <http://www.cmlaw.org>
Tel: (670) 236-0820 Fax: (670) 236-9897 cmrlaw@justice.gov.mp

PUBLIC NOTICE

REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, November 19, 2020, 10:00 a.m.
Commonwealth Law Revision Commission Office
JCT Building II, Unit 6
Susupe, Saipan*

Agenda

1. Preliminary Matters
 - a. Call to Order and Roll Call
 - b. Proof of Notice of Meeting
 - c. Review and Approval of Minutes of February 19, 2020 Regular Meeting and April 20, 2020 Special Meeting
2. Reports of the Executive Director and Committees
 - a. Office & Staff Update
 - b. Publications – Print & Website: Status, Issues, & Plans
 - i. NMI Reporter
 - ii. CMC
 - iii. NMIAC
 - iv. Driver's Handbook
 - c. FY 2020 and FY 2021 Budget & Expenditures
 - d. Sales and Other Reports
3. Unfinished Business
4. New Business
 - a. Seal Contest
 - b. Amazon E-Book
 - c. Commonwealth Code
5. Public Comment
6. Place and Date of Next Meeting
7. Other Matters

* Due to COVID-19 social distancing guidelines, some commission members will be attending the meeting via videoconferencing.

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JOB OPENING: SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER EUCON International School

Duties: Provides instruction at the Secondary School level in the following classes: Fundamental Math, Algebra I and Geometry; creates lesson plans; evaluates student performance and provides feedback; communicates students' progress to parents; develops and updates curriculum for the classroom; maintains accurate records of students' progress; keeps order in the classroom; posts grades and sends grade reports to parents; performs other teaching-related duties.

Other requirements: Baccalaureate degree in liberal arts, stem-science, or engineering; ability to communicate and interact with students and parents; ability to encourage and motivate students; basic computer and microsoft software skills; Chinese language skills preferred, as school instructs both native English and Chinese speaking students.

JOB OPENING: ACCOUNTING CLERK EUCON International School

Duties: The Accounting Clerk, receiving general guidance from the school's Finance Manager, performs general bookkeeping duties, including checking, computation, classifying and recording data to keep financial records; establishes and maintains chart of accounts and subsidiary accounts, allocating, and posting transactions; performs other bookkeeping and accounting assistance tasks.

Other requirements: Must have a high school diploma/GED with at least 12 months of progressive work experience in the accounting clerk field with basic accounting and clerical skills and knowledge. Skill in Microsoft and Quickbooks software, math and English, and operating computer.

Work Location: Eucon International School, Kulales Place,
Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Gualo Rai
Mail Address: P.O. Box 500087, Saipan, MP 96950
E-Mail address: hr@eucon.edu



Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) CNMI Government

INVITATION FOR BID PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-001-21

SUBMISSION DATE: NOVEMBER 13, 2020: 2:00 P.M.

"PROVIDE AND INSTALL TWO BRAND NEW COMMERCIAL A/C UNITS AND TWO OUTDOOR CONDENSING UNITS AT THE TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, TINIAN"

THE BID PACKAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BEGINNING OCTOBER 20, 2020.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "PROVIDE AND INSTALL TWO BRAND NEW COMMERCIAL A/C UNITS AND TWO OUTDOOR CONDENSING UNITS (IFB-001-21)" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR BEFORE 2:00 P.M., NOVEMBER 13, 2020. BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

DATE: _____



COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
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P.O. BOX 501055, SAIPAN MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
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DESIGN/BUILD FOR THE SEAPORT MARINA IMPROVEMENTS TINIAN HARBOR CPA PROJECT NO. CPA-TS-001-20 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting for sealed proposals for the design and construction of improvements to the seaport marina at the Tinian Harbor. The work shall include all design, materials, labor, equipment and construction services necessary to achieve a finished product, including but not limited to the items in the scope of work and those shown on the layout provided in the proposal package.

The Scope of Work (SOW) outlining the project's general requirements may be picked up at the CPA Administration Office at no cost. Project approach and costs must be within the parameters of the established SOW. Any deviation from the SOW, a proposal based on reduced SOW or a proposal that exceeded what is required by the SOW, may be grounds for immediate disqualification of the offeror's proposal package.

A pre-proposal conference will be held on **Friday, November 20, 2020 at 10:00 am** at the CPA Tinian Seaport Office at the Tinian Harbor to discuss the project scope of work in detail. A site inspection will immediately follow the pre-proposal conference. Attendance at this conference is not mandatory.

Questions shall be submitted in writing to Ms. Wendi Prater, CPA Executive Assistant/Project Manager via hand delivery to the CPA Administration Office, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal at the Saipan International Airport, or via email to wprater@cnmiports.com or cpa.enr@pticom.com by no later than 5:00 p.m., Friday, November 27, 2020. All responses to questions or requests for information will be provided to all proposers who have picked up a proposal package.

Proposers are requested to submit one original and four (4) copies of the proposals, sealed in an envelope and marked on the cover package outside as follows: "Design/Build for Seaport Marina Improvement, Tinian Harbor, Tinian, CPA-TS-001-20". Proposals must be submitted no later than **5:00 P.M. LOCAL TIME, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2020**, to the Office of the Executive Director at the Saipan International Airport.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date: October 23, 2020

Nation

Biden's plea for cooperation confronts a polarized Congress

WASHINGTON (AP)—President-elect Joe Biden feels at home on Capitol Hill, but the place sure has changed since he left.

The clubby atmosphere that Biden knew so well during his 36-year Senate career is gone, probably forever. Deal-makers are hard to find. And the election results haven't dealt him a strong hand to pursue his legislative agenda, with Democrats' poor performance in down-ballot races likely leaving them without control of Congress.

The dynamic leaves Biden with little choice but to try to govern from the vanishing middle of a Washington that's been badly ruptured by the tumult of the last decade. With the forces of partisanship and gridlock entrenched, ending what Biden called the "grim era of demonization" could be the central challenge of his presidency—and one that could prove vexing if forces on the left and right refuse to go along.

"There is a certain opportunity for bipartisanship, but it is all going to be deals in the middle," said Rohit Kumar, a former aide to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky. "What I don't know is whether the (Democratic and Republican) parties will allow them to do that because the parties have gotten a lot more polarized."

While it is not settled, Biden faces a high likelihood of becoming the first Democrat in modern history to assume office without his party controlling Congress. Republicans are favored to retain control of the Senate heading into two runoff elections in Georgia in



Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Ky., talks with reporters after he spoke on the Senate floor Monday, Nov. 9, 2020, at the Capitol in Washington.

January. Democrats have already won the House.

GOP control of the Senate would force Biden to curtail his ambitions, all but guaranteeing that big issues like climate change, immigration and expanding "Obamacare" remain mostly unaddressed.

But it would also create space for a different kind of legislative agenda — one founded on bipartisanship and consensus that would seem to play to Biden's strengths. And some lawmakers say voters made clear in the election that governance from the middle is exactly what they want.

Among them is Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, who emerged from a brutal reelection campaign empowered to pursue a brand of pragmatic

centrism that was once common among lawmakers but is now quite rare.

"I have seen, based on the number of phone calls that I have received from both the Democratic senators and Republican colleagues, a real interest in trying to expand the center and work together to confront some of the challenges facing our nation," Collins said. "And I'm encouraged by that."

The glass half-full also depends on a sympathetic appraisal of McConnell, a much-loathed nemesis of Capitol Hill Democrats with a penchant for hardball tactics—and who is no stranger to obstructionism.

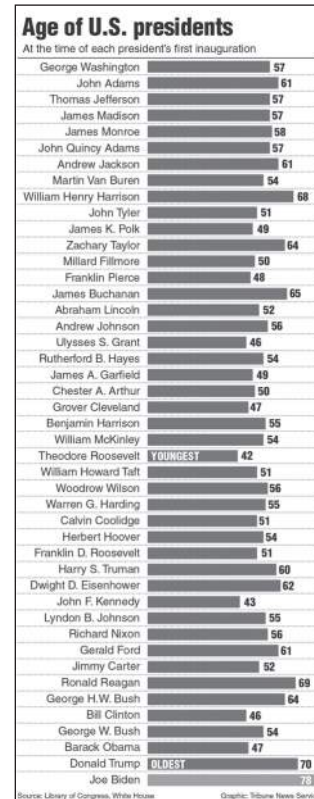
McConnell is an old friend of Biden's, and as vice president, Biden worked successfully with the Kentucky

Republican to avert several tax- and budget-related crises during the Obama administration, including a tax increase on higher-income earners in exchange for renewing most of the 2001 Bush tax cuts.

"Those deals were largely struck out of necessity in moments of crisis—fiscal cliff, debt limit, government shutdowns—those types of things," said Brendan Buck, a former top aide to former House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis. "That's when they had to get together and get things done. I don't know that there's a great deal of history of proactively coming together on big policy issues."

McConnell hasn't let much legislation hit the Senate floor recently, but has the muscle

memory to do bipartisan deals when he sees them. Often, these smaller-bore bills offer political benefits to his members, like a 2016 bill to fight the opioid menace or a widely



AP

backed public lands bill this year. Other recent deals include COVID relief, a 2015 highway bill and a 2016 cancer-fighting "moonshot" bill that was delivered as a goodwill gesture to Biden, who lost his son Beau to brain cancer in 2015.

Eta remains a tropical storm as Florida prepares for 2nd hit

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP)—Eta remained a tropical storm Wednesday afternoon as it prepared to skirt past the heavily populated Tampa Bay region in Florida and crash ashore in the coming hours somewhere to the north along the Gulf of Mexico coast.

The storm's maximum sustained winds remained at about 70 mph (110 kph) off Florida's west coast as the storm moved northward, according to the National Hurricane Center in Miami. Additional weakening was possible as Eta approaches the coast.

Forecasters had posted—but later discontinued—a hurricane watch for a 120-mile (190-kilometer) stretch that includes Tampa and St. Petersburg. Eta had briefly attained hurricane strength Wednesday morning but then weakened. Subsequently, a tropical storm warning was issued for the same general area.

The storm has been in the Gulf of Mexico since crossing over South Florida on Sunday. At 7 p.m. Wednesday, Eta was located 45 miles (70 kilometers) west of St. Petersburg and was moving north at 12 mph (19 kph), the hurricane center reported.

The Tampa Bay region is home to more than 3.5 million people across five coastal counties. No mandatory evacuations were immediately ordered but authorities began opening shelters for anyone needing them. No serious damage or flooding was immediately reported.

Tampa Mayor Jane Castor said special care is taken at shelters to protect people from the coronavirus, such as social distancing, and suggested people bring their own masks.

"Everything will be done to make sure all of our residents are safe," Castor said.

The forecast prompted school officials in Pinellas and Pasco counties, which includes St. Petersburg, to send students home early Wednesday. Both counties announced schools would remain closed Thursday, as did neighboring Hillsborough County.

The Florida Highway Patrol closed the Sunshine Skyway Bridge that links Pinellas and Manatee counties because of high winds. Tampa International Airport tweeted that it would suspend operations at 3 p.m. Wednesday.

Veterans Day in 2020: Quiet parades, somber virtual events

OKLAHOMACITY (AP)—Celebrations marking Veterans Day gave way to somber virtual gatherings Wednesday, with many of the nation's veterans homes barring visitors to protect their residents from the surging coronavirus that has killed thousands of former members of the U.S. military.

Cemeteries decorated with American flags were silent as well, as many of the traditional ceremonies were canceled. With infections raging again nationwide, several veterans homes are fighting new outbreaks.

In New York City, a quiet parade of military vehicles, with no spectators, rolled through Manhattan to maintain the 101-year tradition of veterans marching on Fifth Avenue. President Donald

Trump took part in an observance at Arlington National Cemetery, while President-elect Joe Biden placed a wreath at the Korean War Memorial in Philadelphia.

More than 4,200 veterans have died from COVID-19 at hospitals and homes run by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and nearly 85,000 have been infected, according to the department.

That death toll does not include an untold number who have died in private or state-run veterans facilities, including the Holyoke Soldiers' Home in Massachusetts, which had nearly 80 deaths earlier this year. Two former administrators were charged with criminal offenses after an investigation found that "utterly baffling" decisions

caused the disease to run rampant there.

American veterans are especially vulnerable to COVID-19 because of their age and underlying health conditions, some of which can be traced to exposure to the Vietnam-era defoliant Agent Orange and smoke from burning oilfields in the Persian Gulf.

All told, the coronavirus has taken almost a quarter-million lives in the U.S., or about four times the number of American military deaths in Vietnam.

The Holyoke Soldiers' Home has barred all visitors for two weeks after a staff member tested positive in late October. It honored the veterans throughout the day with gifts, treats, music and a virtual ceremony.

Officials also remembered

those who died at the home in western Massachusetts. "Those veterans that we lost will not be forgotten, and we'll be sure to use their memory that a tragedy like that won't happen again," said state Rep. Aaron Vega.

In Idaho, 33 residents of the state veterans home in Boise have tested positive, including nine on Tuesday, said home administrator Rick Holloway. Six have died, and four are hospitalized.

On Veterans Day, the home is normally full of family members, community groups and officials who gather to thank the former members of the military for their service. This year, the halls were empty, and the home planned to serve residents a special prime rib dinner in their rooms.

Asia

Typhoon-ravaged northeast PH pummeled by new storm

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A typhoon began battering northeastern Philippine provinces Wednesday, leaving at least one person dead and three missing in a region still struggling to recover from a powerful storm that left a trail of death and destruction just over a week ago, officials said.

Typhoon Vamco strengthened with sustained winds of 140 kilometers (87 miles) per hour and gusts of up to 195 kph (121 mph) as it barreled close to the Polillo islands in Quezon province Wednesday night. Nearly 200,000 people have been evacuated to safety in the region, some of them forcibly, officials said.

Quezon and outlying provinces have hardly recovered from the devastation wrought early this month by Typhoon Goni, which blew ashore with destructive super-typhoon force but weakened after slamming into mountain ranges and a string of island provinces. One of the strongest typhoons in the world this year, Goni left more than 30 people



dead or missing and damaged or destroyed more than 270,000 houses and shanties, many along coastal villages.

"This typhoon will test once more our spirit, bruised but not broken," military chief of staff Gen. Gilbert Gapay said of the new typhoon.

Navy, air force and army forces have remained on high

alert from the last typhoon and again deployed disaster-response contingents in high-risk areas ahead of the onslaught, Gapay said in a statement.

Disaster-response officials reported flooding in 32 towns near the country's northeastern coast and a few landslides in the agricultural region, where they said a man died and three

others were missing, without immediately providing details.

More than 187,000 villagers fled to safety Wednesday, about half of them taking shelter mostly in government-run evacuation centers, according to the Office of Civil Defense.

Tens of thousands of others remained displaced after losing their homes in Goni's devastation, including in the hard-hit island province of

AP
A vendor pushes his cart under an umbrella to shield him from rain from Typhoon Vamco in Quezon city, Philippines on Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2020.

Catanduanes, where that typhoon made landfall on Nov. 1 and damaged or destroyed tens of thousands of coastal shanties, houses and buildings, including emergency shelters, and knocked down power and communications.

In Guinobatan town in nearby Albay province, heavy rain generated by Goni washed down volcanic mud, debris and boulders in a torrent of mudflow that engulfed about 150 houses. The owners of those houses remain displaced and were warned against returning to the mudflow-inundated community as the new typhoon approached.

The government's main disaster-response agency pleaded to the media to help authorities relay typhoon alerts in the Goni-devastated northeastern region, saying it could not send messages by cellphones due to damaged telecommuni-

cations systems.

With its wide band of rain clouds, Typhoon Vamco may pass about 50 kilometers (31 miles) north of the capital, Manila, at dawn Thursday if it doesn't shift course, forecasters said.

Classes and government work were suspended in the capital and outlying regions Wednesday. Several international and domestic flights were canceled. Seaports were closed and ferry boats and cargo ships were prohibited from venturing out to sea near the typhoon's path, stranding hundreds of commuters, officials said.

Authorities warned of storm surges of up to 2 meters (6 feet) in Manila and outlying coastal cities, and villagers along the coast and low-lying areas were advised to move to safer ground.

The Philippines is hit by about 20 typhoons and storms each year. It's also located on the so-called Pacific "Ring of Fire," where earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are common, making it one of the world's most disaster-prone countries.

Hong Kong's pro-democracy lawmakers to resign en masse

HONG KONG (AP)—Hong Kong's pro-democracy lawmakers announced Wednesday they would resign en masse after four of them were ousted from the semiautonomous Chinese territory's Legislature in a move one legislator said could sound the "death knell" for democracy there.

The resignation of the 15 remaining pro-democracy lawmakers will ratchet up tensions over the future of Hong Kong, a former British colony that has long been a regional financial hub and bastion of Western-style civil liberties but over which China's government has increasingly tightened its control. A new national security law imposed by Beijing this year has alarmed the international community.

The mass departure will also leave Hong Kong's Legislature with only pro-Beijing lawmakers, who already made up a majority but can now pass bills favored by Beijing without much opposition.

The lawmakers told a news conference they would submit their letters of resignation on Thursday. The announcement came hours after the Hong Kong government said it was disqualifying the four legislators—Alvin Yeung, Dennis Kwok, Kwok Ka-ki and Kenneth Leung.

The ousters came after China's National People's Congress Standing Committee

passed a resolution this week saying that any lawmaker who supports Hong Kong's independence, refuses to acknowledge China's sovereignty over the city, threatens national security, or asks external forces to interfere in the city's affairs should be disqualified.

"Today we will resign from our positions because our partners, our colleagues have been disqualified by the central government's ruthless move," Wu Chi-wai, the leader of the pro-democracy camp, told reporters.

During the news conference, the lawmakers held hands and chanted, "Hong Kong add oil! Together we stand!" The phrase "add oil" is a direct translation of a Chinese expression of encouragement.

"This is an actual act by Beijing ... to sound the death knell of Hong Kong's democracy fight because they would think that, from now on, anyone they found to be politically incorrect or unpatriotic or are simply not likable to look at, they could just oust you using any means," lawmaker Claudia Mo told reporters.

Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam defended their removal, saying legislators must act properly and that the city needs a body comprised of patriots.

"We cannot allow members of the Legislative Council who have been judged in accordance with the law to be unable to fulfill the requirements

and prerequisites for serving on the Legislative Council to continue to operate in the Legislative Council," Lam said.

Still, Lam said that the Legislature would not become a rubber-stamp body, and that diverse opinion is welcome.

"In terms of legality and constitutionality, obviously, from our point of view, this is clearly in breach of the Basic Law and our rights to participate in public affairs, and a failure to observe due process," Kwok, one of the ousted lawmakers, told reporters, referring to Hong Kong's mini-constitution.

In recent months, Beijing has increasingly clamped down on Hong Kong, which was handed back from British colonial rule in 1997, despite promising at the time to leave the territory's more open legal and economic systems intact for 50 years until 2047.

Beijing imposed a national security law in June that some have labeled draconian after anti-government protests rocked the city for months last year, and it has used it to crackdown on opposition voices.

In response, the U.S. leveled sanctions on several officials, including Hong Kong's pro-Beijing leader, several Western countries have suspended their extradition treaties with the territory, and Australia and Britain offered Hong Kongers easier paths to settle in those countries.



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-19-028 Revision No.2

REPLACEMENT OF SADOG TASI WWTP CLARIFIER

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Replacement of Sadog Tasi WWTP Clarifier in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The intent of the contract is for the Contractor to provide all labor, equipment, supplies and materials necessary to complete the scope of work which consists of: installation of a new circular clarifier mechanism and effluent launder box, construction of a sloped concrete floor, and other miscellaneous features. The work shall include; the dewatering and cleaning of aeration basin #3 and the clarifier, routing process flow and maintaining conditions during the construction period, and returning process flow from the aeration basin to the clarifier. The work shall be completed with minimal disruption to the daily operation of the Sadog Tasi Waste Water Treatment Plant. CUC requires the Project to be completed in **365 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set. If you have purchased this IFB before you do not have to repurchase but you would need to register with our office to receive a package.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **October 29, 2020 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies of the bid MUST be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-19-028, Replacement of the Sadog Tasi Clarifier Revision No. 2" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) November 17, 2020, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A *Bid Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 a.m. (ChST) on November 5, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Western Knudsen, P.E., CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer and to CUC P&S, Senior Administrative Technician, Christie L. Sablan at christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

World

MOSCOW (AP)—Developers of Sputnik V, Russia's experimental COVID-19 vaccine, announced Wednesday that early, interim data from a large trial suggests the shot appears to be 92% effective.

The statement, which did not include detailed information about the trial, comes just two days after a similar one from Pfizer Inc., but is based on far fewer virus cases. Some experts suggest the data may have been rushed out in an effort to keep up with the worldwide race for a successful coronavirus vaccine.

Russia touted Sputnik V, a two-shot vaccine, as the world's first to receive a government go-ahead after it was approved in early August without completing advanced testing. The move drew considerable criticism from experts who said data from tens of thousands of people were needed to ensure the safety and effectiveness of the vaccine before it is given widely.

Russian officials announced advanced studies among 40,000 volunteers two weeks after it received government approval. On Wednesday, Russia's Direct Investment Fund that bankrolled the effort announced that an analysis of the early data of the study showed that the vaccine "had an efficacy rate of 92%."

The interim analysis looked at 20 confirmed coronavirus infections registered so far among over 16,000 volunteers who received both of the two shots of either the vaccine or



In this Sept. 15, 2020, file photo, a Russian medical worker administers a shot of Russia's experimental Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine in Moscow, Russia.

Russia says COVID-19 vaccine is 92% effective on early data

the placebo, the Fund's statement said. More than 20,000 trial participants have so far received just one shot.

Some outside experts deemed the results of the interim analysis promising and consistent with what the studies of the Pfizer vaccine showed, but questioned the timing of its release.

"Whilst encouraging, I wor-

ry that these data have been rushed out on the back of the Pfizer/BioNtech announcement earlier in the week. The Sputnik data are based on only 20 cases of COVID-19 in the trial participants, compared to more than 90 cases in the earlier trial," Eleanor Riley, professor of immunology and infectious disease at the University of Edinburgh, said in a statement.

Ravindra Gupta, professor of clinical microbiology at the University of Cambridge, also pointed at a small number of virus cases. "They've calculated a 92% protection rate, but among 20 infections. That's fairly small numbers. So we want to see the whole results eventually," Gupta told The Associated Press.

The early Russian data released Wednesday didn't break down how many volunteers received the vaccine and

how many got dummy shots, but the 92% effectiveness rate indicates that nearly all infections must have occurred among those who received the placebo.

It remained unclear from the statement how coronavirus was diagnosed among the participants of the trial and whether all of them, including those showing no symptoms, were tested for the virus.

The release of "the interim results of the post-registration

clinical trials that convincingly demonstrate Sputnik V vaccine's efficacy gives way to mass vaccination in Russia against COVID-19 in the coming weeks," Alexander Gintsburg, director of the Moscow-based Gamaleya Institute that developed the vaccine, was quoted as saying in the statement.

The announcement comes just two days after Pfizer sparked worldwide optimism by reporting that an early peek at its vaccine data suggests it is 90% effective—though Pfizer also did not provide a detailed look at its data. The Direct Investment Fund has not immediately responded to a request for comment whether the analysis was planned in advance or inspired by the Pfizer statement.

Ilya Yasny, head of scientific research at the Russian investment fund Inbio Ventures, pointed out to the AP that the efficacy rates may change once all 40,000 volunteers are given the shots. "How the numbers will change once all 40,000 people are given shots is unclear," Yasny said. "I would say it is premature to draw conclusions from the analysis."

According to the statement, as many as 10,000 people from "high-risk groups," such as medical workers, have already been vaccinated outside of the trial, despite multiple expert warnings against wider use until all the tests are completed.

At the same time surveys show that many Russians are skeptical about the shots. According to a late August poll by the Levada Center, Russia's top independent pollster, 54% of Russians were not prepared to take the widely publicized shots.

Thousands call for Armenia PM to resign over truce agreement

YEREVAN, Armenia (AP)—Thousands of people protested in Armenia's capital on Wednesday, demanding the prime minister's resignation after he signed an agreement with Azerbaijan to halt weeks of fighting over Nagorno-Karabakh that calls for territorial concessions in favor of Azerbaijan.

The rally organized by opposition parties in Yerevan reportedly drew up to 10,000 people. Some clashed with police, and many were detained and released later in the day. Demonstrators chanted "Nikol, go away" and "Nikol, the traitor," referring to Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian.

The unrest was triggered by a Moscow-brokered truce between Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to early Tuesday after more than six weeks of deadly clashes over Nagorno-Karabakh, a separatist region that

lies within Azerbaijan but has been under control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia since a separatist war there ended in 1994.

The two ex-Soviet nations have been locked in a conflict over the territory for decades. Heavy fighting flared up in late September and has left hundreds, possibly thousands, dead in the biggest escalation in a quarter-century.

Several cease-fires announced over the past six weeks failed to halt the violence, but the current agreement appeared to be holding, with neither side reporting any more fighting since it came into force.

The pact, which is celebrated in Azerbaijan and has angered Armenians, calls for Armenia to turn over control of some areas it holds outside the borders of Nagorno-Karabakh. They include the Lachin region, which the main

road leading from Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia passes through. The agreement calls for the road, the so-called Lachin Corridor, to remain open and be protected by Russian peacekeepers.

The deal also calls for transport links to be established through Armenia that would connect Azerbaijan and its western exclave of Nakhchivan, which is surrounded by Armenia, Iran and Turkey.

A total of 1,960 Russian peacekeepers, some of whom have already arrived in Nagorno-Karabakh, are to be deployed in the region under a five-year mandate to secure the truce.

It came days after Azerbaijan pressed its offensive deeper into Nagorno-Karabakh and took control of the city of Shushi, strategically positioned on heights overlooking the regional capital of Stepanakert.

Travelers to Spain must provide negative COVID-19 test

BARCELONA, Spain (AP)—Travelers bound for Spain from countries considered high-risk areas for the coronavirus will be asked to provide proof of a negative test to visit the European country, authorities said Wednesday.

Starting Nov. 23, travelers to Spain will be required to submit a negative test result from within 72 hours prior to their planned departure. They will be able to do so via the internet, a smartphone application, or with a document before boarding a plane or boat.

The proof of being virus-free before traveling will come on top of the temperature checks performed on arriving passengers at Spain's airports and ports. The measure will apply to countries designated as "high risk."

The European Union con-

siders member nations to be high-risk zones if either their 14-day cumulative case notification rate is 50 or more and the positive test rate for COVID-19 is 4% or more, or if their 14-day cumulative case notification rate is more than 150 per 100,000 inhabitants.

For non-EU countries and European nations within the visa-free Schengen travel area, Spain considers those with an accumulated 150 cases per 100,000 inhabitants over 14 days.

Health minister Salvador Illa said the government took the measure in line with guidelines established by the EU last month. He said that EU members had opted for the use of "diagnostic tests and not quarantines" to enable safe travel inside the bloc.

Spain's robust tourism in-

dustry, a pillar of its economy, has taken a huge hit due to fears and restrictions caused by the virus.

Madrid's regional authorities, which have been asking for tighter controls for the capital's airport, celebrated the decision it had been demanding for months.

However, the number of imported coronavirus cases to Spain has been negligible, according to Illa.

Spain's strict lockdown in the spring reined in its first national outbreak, but it did not completely eliminate the virus from the population. The virus rebounded when Spain reactivated its economic and social life in the summer, forcing a new round of restrictions, including nationwide nightly curfew to be applied in recent weeks.

Off The Wall

NYC woman gets ill swan to clinic via foot, car and subway



AP

This Nov. 11, 2020 photo provided by Ariel Cordova-Rojas shows her with Bae, a female mute swan, at the Wild Bird Fund Clinic, in New York.

NEW YORK (AP)—Ariel Cordova-Rojas went to New York's Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge last week to celebrate her 30th birthday.

She ended up rescuing a swan with lead poisoning, taking it to a wildlife clinic by foot, car and subway with the help of both friends and strangers.

Cordova-Rojas is trained in identifying and rescuing wildlife, the New York Times reported, having worked at the Wild Bird Fund clinic in Manhattan for five years.

She got to the Queens wildlife refuge on Nov. 5 and spotted a swan alone in the grass on the side of the water.

She approached it and saw it was unable to walk or fly. She wrapped the 17-pound bird, which she says is named Bae, in her jacket and carried it a mile to the refuge entrance, the newspaper reported.

Calls to various animal rescue services and the ranger stations yielded no immediate

assistance. Then a couple with a car agreed to drive the swan and Cordova-Rojas to a nearby subway station. (The couple persuaded yet another friend with a car to help get Cordova-Rojas, her bike and the swan to a subway station.) An employee of Wild Bird Fund met them at the Nostrand station in Brooklyn and helped them get to the organization's clinic on the Upper West Side. Photos show the swan nestled in an orange jacket on a seat in a train car.

Cordova-Rojas told the Associated Press the swan was being treated for lead poisoning and with antifungals and antibacterial medications. She has made a friend of another swan at the clinic and is gaining strength and mobility. It could take three weeks or up to two months before Bae returns to the refuge, Cordova-Rojas said.

The tale of the swan's rescue saga inspired an outpouring of affection.

Female banded mongooses lead battle for chance to find mates

WASHINGTON (AP)—When families of banded mongooses prepare to fight, they form battle lines.

Each clan of about 20 animals stands nose to nose, their ears flattened back, as they stare down the enemy. A patch of scrubby savannah separates them, until the first animals run forward.

"Then they bunch up into writhing balls, chaotic and fast-moving, and you hear high-pitched screeches," said Michael Cant, a biologist at the University of Exeter who has been studying the species in Uganda for 25 years. "We call it mongoose warfare."

The catlike striped mammals only weigh up to 5 pounds each, but the vicious fights can last more than an hour. A question that has intrigued Cant and other scientists is: Why do these social animals fight?

Chimpanzees are the most

famous example of family-oriented mammals who wage group warfare—both to defend or expand their territories and to take females from other families. But individual mongooses almost never leave the group they're born into. Banded mongooses are known for almost unbreakable devotion to their birth family—as well as cooperative living habits, including sharing den-guarding and pup-rearing responsibilities, said Cant.

Combining field observations and analysis of 19 years of demographic and behavioral data for a population of 10 to 12 families — about 200 mongooses at any time — Cant and his colleagues have found that at least one purpose of the fights is to allow females a chance to mate with opponent males. That avoids or minimizes inbreeding.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

†JASON FRANKLIN MARATITA SABLAN

LOVINGLY KNOWN AS "PEPS"

Born on January 01, 1980 and Called to Eternal Life on November 08, 2020

In his New Eternal Rest he now joins:

Grandparents: †Jose Concepcion Sablan & †Maria Rosario Sablan
†Pedro Songao Maratita & †Maria Ulloa Maratita

His memory will forever live in the hearts of his:

Common-Law Wife: Colleen Salas Deleon Guerrero

Children: Tyanna Elizabeth Deleon Guerrero Sablan / Nathan Camacho
Lourdes Maria Deleon Guerrero Sablan

Parents: Francisco Rosario Sablan (Ankie Pepero) & Beata Ulloa Maratita Sablan (Vicky)

Siblings: Peter Anthony & Victoria C. Maratita (Des'ree & Zachary Benavente (Liam Jace), Anabeata Maratita / Franko Bondoc, Donnina Maratita / Daniel Calvo II, Peter Franklin Maratita, Victoria Ann Maratita, Gina Josephine Maratita, Hope Hevannah Maratita)
Madonna Marie M. Sablan & Jonathan D. Hensley (Makenzie Nicole, Makaylie Marie & Jayley Jo)
Nina Nicole M. Sablan & Lorenzo V. Deleon Guerrero (†Isabelle F. Deleon Guerrero, Zowie Isabelle S. Deleon Guerrero, and Lorenzo Francisco S. Deleon Guerrero)

In-Laws: Father/Mother In-Law: Antonio I. & Lourdes S. Deleon Guerrero

Brothers/Sisters In-Law: Jacqueline Deleon Guerrero & Estandisao Fujihira Jr. (Naioki Shae)
Antonette DLG. & Ned Q. Norita (Tonchu, Nadja Rae, Aiken & Avawn)
Karen DLG. & Glenn C. Sablan (Kaylenn, Gavin, Gio & Griffin)
AJ S. Deleon Guerrero & Krizia D. Mendoza (Ariah & Kyon)
Allen S. Deleon Guerrero
Aaron S. Deleon Guerrero

He will be missed by numerous family members, friends, & colleagues.

Daily mass is being offered at 6:00 a.m. at our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral.

On Monday, November 16, 2020 at 8:00 a.m., Responso services and recitation of the Holy Rosary will take place at Mount Carmel Cathedral.

Mass of Christian Burial will be at 10:00 a.m. followed immediately by Interment Services at Chalan Kanoa Cemetery where he will be laid to rest.

For everyone's safety, you are requested to wear a mask and observe social distancing during the ceremony.

Thank You, Si Yu'us Ma'ase and May God Bless us all.

The Family of the late
†Jason Franklin Maratita Sablan.

IN LOVING MEMORY

†REED CAMACHO

Born to life on June 28, 1977 • Called to Eternal life on November 9, 2020

Wife: Julie Tokyo Camacho

Son: Reed Tokyo Camacho Jr.

Step Father: Ignacio T. Ada

Siblings and In-Laws: Michael & Jennifer Camacho and family, Jennifer & Jonel Gayatao and family, Tanya & Nathaniel Simmons and family, Ignacio & Ciara Ada and family, Allison Baiei

In-Laws: Victoria Lisa Rios & family, Angelina Camacho & +Dennis Lee. T. Camacho and family, Hilda Rios & family, Chuzi Rios & Clarissa Flores, Christine Tokyo & Steve Quinata and family, Dorothy Tokyo & Jasper Saures and family, Annie Tokyo & Joseph Indalecio and family, Melinda Tokyo & Hermany Santos and family

Godchildren: Michael Jay Camacho & Ben Nur Hossain

Numerous nephews, nieces, cousins, aunts, uncles, friends will miss him dearly...

On Saturday, November 14, 2020, at 8:15 a.m., he will be escorted from the Commonwealth Health Center Chapel to the Grace Christian Assembly (Navy Hill). Public viewing will begin from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Service for Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:00 a.m. followed by Interment Services at the Tanapag Public Cemetery where our beloved will be laid to rest.

In his new Life, Reed will be met at the gates of Heaven by his:

Mother: Theodora Camacho Ada

Maternal Grandparents: Caridad Taitano Camacho
Thomas Rosario Camacho

Aunts & Uncles: Jose Tarope, Rebecca C. Magofna
Dennis Lee T. Camacho, Susana R. Tokyo & Michael M. Tokyo
Reeve Tokyo Camacho

Parents In-law: Susana R. Tokyo & Michael M. Tokyo

Son: Reeve Tokyo Camacho

His loving memories will forever live in the hearts of his:

Your thoughts, prayers, words of comfort and presence are sincerely appreciated.

Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Ghilisou, Kinisou Chapur, and Thank you.
Julie Tokyo Camacho & Reed Tokyo Camacho Jr.

Science & Technology

Destruction of murder hornets nest doesn't end threat

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP)—When scientists in Washington state destroyed the first nest of so-called murder hornets found in the U.S., they discovered about 500 live specimens in various stages of development, officials said Tuesday.

Among them were nearly 200 queens that had the potential to start their own nests, said Sven-Erik Spichiger, an entomologist leading the fight to kill the hornets.

"We got there just in the

nick of time," he said.

Still, that didn't end the threat from the giant insects that can deliver painful though rarely deadly stings to people and wipe out entire hives of honey bees.

Scientists think other nests already exist and say it's impossible to know if any queens escaped before the first nest was destroyed. Asian giant hornets, an invasive pest not native to the U.S., are the world's largest hornet at 2

inches (5 centimeters) long, and a predator of other insects, including the honey bees that pollinate many of the crops in Washington's multi-billion-dollar agriculture industry.

Despite their nickname and the hype that has stirred fears in an already bleak year, the hornets kill at most a few dozen people a year in Asian countries, and experts say it's probably far less. By comparison, hornets, wasps and bees typically found in the United



(AP PHOTO/ELAINE THOMPSON, FILE) In this Oct. 24, 2020, file photo, a Washington state Department of Agriculture worker holds two of the dozens of Asian giant hornets vacuumed from a tree in Blaine, Wash. When scientists destroyed the first nest of so-called murder hornets found in the U.S. recently, they discovered about 500 live specimens inside in various stages of development.

Washington State Department of Agriculture, which plans to continue trapping the hornets for at least three more years to determine whether the area is free of them.

The first Asian giant hornet was found in the state a year ago and the first was trapped in July. Several more were later caught in Whatcom County. Murder hornets also have been found in British Columbia, Canada.

Spichiger said it is impossible to determine how the hornets got to the area, but the goal is to wipe them out before they get established and spread.

TikTok asks court to intervene as Trump order looms

By MATT O'BRIEN
AP TECHNOLOGY WRITER

The popular video-sharing app TikTok, its future in limbo since President Donald Trump tried to shut it down earlier this fall, is asking a federal court to intervene.

TikTok's Chinese owner, ByteDance, has until Thursday to sell off its U.S. operations under an executive order that Trump signed in August.

Trump in September gave his tentative blessing to a ByteDance proposal meant to resolve U.S. national security concerns by placing TikTok

under the oversight of American companies Oracle and Walmart, each of which would also have a financial stake in the company. But TikTok said this week it's received "no clarity" from the U.S. government about whether its proposals have been accepted.

The deal has been under a national-security review by the interagency Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, or CFIUS, which is led by the Treasury Department. The department "remains focused" on resolving the alleged national security risks posed by TikTok, a Treasury spokes-

woman said in a statement Wednesday evening.

"With the November 12 CFI-US deadline imminent and without an extension in hand, we have no choice but to file a petition in court to defend our rights and those of our more than 1,500 employees in the US," TikTok said in a written statement Tuesday.

Trump has cited concerns that the Chinese government could spy on TikTok users if the app remains under Chinese ownership. TikTok has denied it's a security threat but said it's still trying to work with the administration to resolve its concerns.

States kill an average of 62 people a year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has said.

The first murder hornets nest—found in a tree and destroyed in late October in Whatcom County along the Canadian border—was about the size of a basketball. It was located after state scientists trapped several hornets and attached radio trackers to some of them using dental floss.

Inside, researchers found:

■ 190 total larvae that de-

veloped from eggs.

■ 108 pupae, the next stage after larvae. They were nearly all queens.

■ 112 workers, which included 85 workers previously vacuumed out of the nest.

■ 76 queens, nearly all of them new virgin queens. New queens emerge from the nest, mate and then leave to find a place to spend winter and later start a new colony.

Most of the specimens were still alive when the nest was opened, according to the

TECH Q&A: Choosing home network security software

Q: Comcast has been providing its Xfinity internet customers with the Norton Security Online program for free. But it will drop Norton at the end of December and replace it with Comcast's own xFi Advanced Security. Will I need to add other protection for my computer? What's available?

A: The xFi Advanced Security software is a firewall program that Comcast said will protect all the devices on your home network rather than just computers or cellphones. While that sounds good, here are some things you should think about:

■ Comcast's xFi Advanced Security is aimed at people who have lots of home network devices, including gadgets that are sometimes poorly protected, such as Wi-Fi enabled security cameras and smart thermostats. If you don't have such devices in your home, xFi may not offer you any additional benefit.

—The xFi Advanced Security program doesn't offer the range of protection that Norton Security Online did. While Norton is both an antivirus program and a firewall, Comcast recommends using a non-Comcast antivirus program along with its xFi firewall. (For a list of free and for-pay antivirus programs, see tinyurl.com/wlsskg5).

Be careful about choosing an antivirus program. If you plan to use both xFi Advanced Security and an antivirus pro-

By STEVE ALEXANDER
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

Steve Alexander covers technology for the Minneapolis Star Tribune. Readers may write to him at Tech Q&A, 425 Portland Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn. 55488-0002; email: steve.j.alexander@gmail.com. Please include a full name, city and phone number.



gram, be sure to choose antivirus software that does not include a firewall (running two firewalls at the same time can cause problems.)

If you decide to avoid xFi Advanced Security entirely, you can choose either a combination antivirus-firewall program, or download separate antivirus and firewall programs. (For free firewall programs, see tinyurl.com/yyxfvq2t).

■ You'll need to manage your xFi firewall and antivirus program separately, which may be more complexity than you like. While Norton Security Online was downloaded to your computer and phones and managed from there, xFi Advanced Security resides on a Comcast server and can be turned on or off (but not modified to tighten or loosen security) via a Comcast app or web page. Whatever antivirus program you use will be managed on your computer.

Q: I have an iPhone X model that is disabled because I entered the wrong password too many times. Apple says the only way to unlock my phone would also erase my data. I'd

like to avoid that, because the phone contains photos and videos that I haven't backed up. What can I do?

A: Apple designed the iPhone's password to be the ultimate protection for the phone's data. As a result, the only way to unlock an iPhone without a password is to perform a "factory reset," which will erase the phone's data.

However, there's a small chance you can recover your photos and videos. When you set up your phone, you were asked if you wanted to use iCloud. If you said yes and chose iCloud Backup, then your data has been backed up ever since, up to the 5-gigabyte limit of your free iCloud storage space.

Because the data stored in iCloud isn't affected by resetting a phone, you could copy it back to the phone when the reset is complete (see tinyurl.com/y68uttv3).

E-mail tech questions to steve.j.alexander@gmail.com or write to Tech Q&A, 650 3rd Av. S., Suite 1300, Minneapolis, MN 55488. Include name, city and telephone number.



A farmer in Lamesa, Texas, turns over dry soil in his cotton field

Spare the plow to save the soil

As global warming dries out the world's agricultural zones, farmers learn that traditional, annual plowing impoverishes and dries out their soil and adopt **no-till farming**.



Waste from last year's crop, plowed underground, decays and enriches the soil very little

Deep plowing (tillage) turns up too much soil and leaves no plant material on the surface to stop wind and rain from carrying soil away

It also consumes large amounts of diesel fuel, cutting into farmers' profits

It releases more carbon dioxide into the air than other tillage methods

© 2020 TNS

Source: US Agriculture Department Natural Resources Conservation Service; TNS Photos Graphic: Helen McComas, Tribune News Service

No-till farming lets dead plants protect soil

Soybeans rows separated by last season's corn stalks left on ground

A no-till planter drills seeds into the ground, causing little disturbance

No-till soil often has more organic matter and biological activity than a conventionally plowed field



Life & Style

New Yorker fires writer Jeffrey Toobin after Zoom incident

NEW YORK (AP)—The New Yorker has fired longtime staff writer Jeffrey Toobin after he reportedly exposed him-

self during a Zoom conference last month. He had already been on suspension and is also on leave from CNN, where he

is chief legal analyst.

"I was fired today by @NewYorker after 27 years as a Staff Writer. I will always love

the magazine, will miss my colleagues, and will look forward to reading their work," Toobin tweeted Wednesday.

In a company memo, Conde Nast Chief People Officer Stan Duncan wrote that its "investigation regarding Jeffrey Toobin is complete, and as a result, he is no longer affiliated with our company."



Toobin

is a former associate counsel in the Department of Justice who for the New Yorker has written about everything from the O.J. Simpson murder trial to the impeachment hearings of President Donald Trump.

"I want to assure everyone that we take workplace matters seriously. We are committed to fostering an environment where everyone feels respected and upholds our standards of conduct," Duncan said.

Toobin, 60, is one of the country's most prominent legal authors and commentators. He

He has been with CNN since 2002 and is the author of several books, most recently "True Crimes and Misdemeanors: The Investigation of Donald Trump," published in August. His 1996 book, "The Run of His Life: The People v. O.J. Simpson," was adapted into an FX series.

Sculpture celebrating Mary Wollstonecraft draws criticism

LONDON (AP)—A sculpture celebrating Mary Wollstonecraft as the mother of feminism has attracted criticism even before it was unveiled.

Artist Maggi Hambling said the sculpture in London "celebrates the spirit of Mary Wollstonecraft," the author of the 18th-century treatise "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman." The artwork, cast

in silvered bronze, features a small nude female figure emerging from a large abstract mass of female forms.

The sculpture was unveiled Tuesday after a decade of campaigning and fundraising, but many critics took to Twitter to question why it had to feature a naked female figure. Writer Caitlin Moran, among others, asked why male intellectuals and his-

torical figures haven't been celebrated with nude statues.

Defending the sculpture, Hambling said that it wasn't meant to be a "historical likeness" and that the figure at the top of the artwork "is open and challenging the world."

"Clothes define people ... As she's Everywoman, I'm not defining her in any particular clothes," she said. "It's

not a conventional heroic or heroic likeness of Mary Wollstonecraft. It's a sculpture about now, in her spirit."

Campaigners have worked for years to celebrate Wollstonecraft in north London, near where she lived and set up a girls' boarding school. The author died aged 38 after the birth of her daughter, the writer Mary Shelley.

Sculpture restoration work draws laughs, memories in Spain

MADRID (AP)—Restoration work on a sculpture in northern Spain has resurrected memories of a restored Christ fresco in another Spanish city eight years ago that drew ridicule as well as tourists.

The latest incident concerns a relief sculpture on the exterior of an ornate office building in the city of Palencia. What was once the bust of a smiling woman now looks more like the head of a cartoon character.

The disfigurement was bought to light by a local artist who lives near the office building and was tipped off by a florist on his street. Antonio Capel posted before and after photographs on his Facebook page, triggering a flurry of social media reaction and attention from journalists.

"I was surprised. How could they have done this?" Capel told The Associated Press on Wednesday. "This must be at



(AP PHOTO/ALBERTO CALLEJA - LEFT IMAGE - & AGENCIA ICAI - RIGHT IMAGE)

This combo pictures shows a sculpture before (right) and after being restored (left) on the exterior of an ornate office building in the city of Palencia, Spain, Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2020. Restoration work on a sculpture in northern Spain has resurrected memories of a restored Christ fresco in another Spanish city eight years ago that drew ridicule as well as tourists.

least 10-years-old, and we're only finding out now."

He said the 20th-century building belongs to a bank but tenants decided to fix the façade some years ago.

Now, Spanish media are showing images of people stopping to stare up at the building and to take photos.

The poorly done restoration

drew immediate comparisons with an "Ecce Homo" fresco in the northern Spain town of Borja. A local amateur artist decided the circa 1930 depiction of Christ at the Sanctuary of Mercy church needed restoration, but the face she produced in 2012 immediately drew comparisons to a monkey.

However, her work turned

into a Borja tourist attraction. It remains to be seen if the Palencia job will have the same effect.

A Palencia City Hall spokesman who declined to offer a name following internal procedure was unable to say when the work was carried out or by whom but said the restoration would most likely be investigated by regional authorities.

A masked-up society present challenges to deaf citizens

DEAR ABBY: As we return to work, businesses and expanded health care are opening up after the pandemic shutdown. We all are pretty much required to wear masks anywhere we go these days.

I am a deaf person and rely on lip-reading for communication. Wearing a mask has shut out my contact with the hearing world as far as communication goes. I have been mistreated in more ways than one because masks do not allow me to lip read. When I'm not able to have a sign language interpreter with me, I bring a pen and pad everywhere I go to converse as best as I can.

I am a very patient person; however, people in the public sector are not being patient nor compassionate in helping us deaf individuals. Please understand, we are TRYING to communicate as best as we can. We simply ask the community to be patient and either lower your mask to respond, or write your response. Yelling through the mask is pointless.

DEAF IN LAS VEGAS

DEAR DEAF: I can only imagine how frustrating and isolating this has been for you and other deaf people. Reusable transparent masks and masks with clear plastic inserts (windows) are available on the internet. (NPR has posted a YouTube video demonstration.) I would urge anyone who has contact with deaf individuals to go online and check this out. Some are marked, "Hearing Impaired." I have considered buying some, if only so friends and family

can see me in my entirety and know without question when I'm being facetious.

DEAR ABBY: I babysit my 1-year-old grandson 40 hours a week while my son and daughter-in-law work nights. They were paying me \$80 a week, then suddenly stopped. My son said they might not pay me all the time because they often forget to "debit over" at the store to get the money for me.

I watched the baby for seven hours on Sunday, too, while my son enjoyed a day off. When I asked him if he remembered to debit over, he replied, "Debit over for what?" I said, "For my services." He said, "Services for what?" I said, "Babysitting," and he replied that his wife should have paid me, but she didn't.

FORGOTTEN IN FLORIDA

DEAR FORGOTTEN: I'm sorry to say this, but your son is a deadbeat who should be ashamed of himself. He could pay you by check or an electronic transfer if he doesn't have the cash on hand. If you need money, find a client who will honor the deal, which will let your son and his wife learn how expensive replacing you will be. (If you decide to let them rehire you, make sure you get the money upfront.)

DEAR ABBY: I want to be a good friend, but I'm at my wits' end. A friend has decided he is going to be a singer-songwriter, and he's terrible. He keeps sending me videos, invitations to watch him perform online concerts, etc. I have tried offering

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

constructive criticism, which he deflects. Now he has recorded a CD, which he wants to send me at his expense. I do not want him to waste his money, and I don't care to waste my time listening to it. Is there a gracious way out of this situation?

NOT INTERESTED IN THE WEST

DEAR NOT INTERESTED: Yes. Accept the disc, which he is sending at his expense. And when he asks you for a compliment, give him one. In other words, be a friend, not a music critic.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



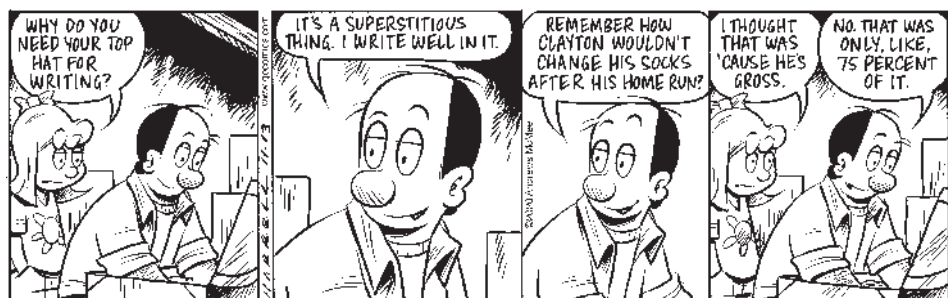
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Small batteries

4 PC key

7 Shame

12 TV schedule abbr.

13 Standard

14 Factions

15 100 percent

16 Minimizes

18 Sleep acronym

19 Squelched

20 Persian Gulf land

22 Jo's sister

23 And others (Lat.)

27 Half of bi-

29 Chevy model

31 Praline nut

34 Smidgens

35 Office machine

37 Prohibit

38 Navy commando

39 Past

41 Oxen's burden

DOWN

45 Delta deposits

47 Spacecraft compartment

48 Makes light of

52 Geological period

53 Suspect's excuse

54 Lion's home

55 Aries

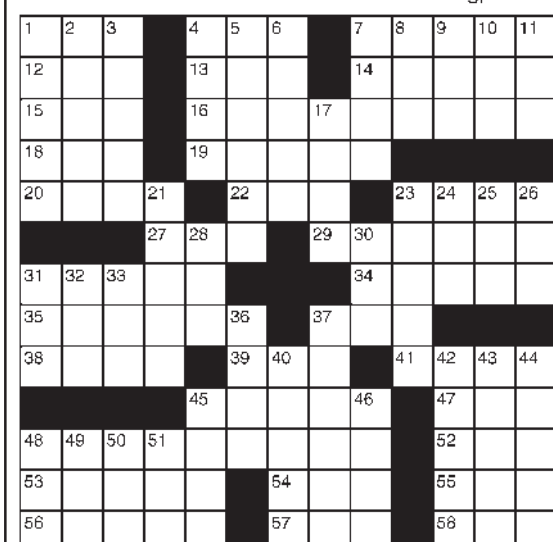
56 Started

57 Rds.

58 Reply (Abbr.)

Solution time: 25 mins.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER 11-13



STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Gerard Butler, 51; Jimmy Kimmel, 53; Whoopi Goldberg, 65; Chris Noth, 66.

Happy Birthday: Set your mind free of clutter and pending problems that hold you hostage. Evaluate your life, position and goals. Settle differences, and make a move that will bring you peace of mind and to head in a direction of personal growth, adventure and fulfillment of lifelong ambitions. Take ownership of mistakes, and move forward with transparency. Your numbers are 7, 18, 21, 27, 32, 39, 45.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): A passionate attitude can do you more harm than good if you share with the wrong person. Don't display your emotions when dealing with professional matters if you want to get ahead. Listen, be objective and make wise decisions. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Leave nothing to chance. Put your strategy in place, and follow through until you are satisfied with the results. Don't jeopardize your health or compromise your reputation or position. Shoot for the stars; recognition for your accomplishments will be yours. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Keep moving forward. Do what you say and avoid criticism. Don't let anyone interfere with your plans or meddle in your affairs. Choose fitness and self-improvement as your goals for the day, and incorporate a rigorous health routine into your schedule. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Pursue your plans. Bring about the changes that will validate your beliefs. Don't take

risks when it comes to your health or physical well-being. Look for opportunities that substantiate what you want to accomplish. Make a move based on intellect, not emotion. *****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Take it easy. Don't make a rash move. Look at every angle and focus on what is in your best interest. Refuse to get involved in someone else's dream. Venture down the path that will bring you peace of mind and happiness. **

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Expand your interests. Sign up for online classes, pick up a new hobby or apply for a license that will help you further your professional goals. Share your thoughts and plans with a close friend, relative or lover. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Take time to listen to what others have to say. A misunderstanding will damage a relationship that is important to you. Be part of the solution, not the problem, when dealing with domestic matters. Physical activity will relieve stress. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Refuse to let your emotions step in when dealing with sensitive issues. A clear view of what's happening will be necessary if you want to resolve pending problems. Stay focused, be moderate and offer feasible solutions. Welcome change. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Take care of your responsibilities before you do other things. Do things according to specification, or someone will point out where you went wrong. Plan something special for you and someone you love. Romance is encouraged. ****

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Get approval before making a change that will affect others. An unusual request or project will entice you. You'll come up with a unique solution that will make your life easier. A change at home will ease stress. **

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Take care of personal matters. Find a healthy, fun way to stay in shape. Listen to regulations set by authorities to ensure that you are doing your part to keep your community safe. Refuse temptation and emotional manipulation. **

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Jump into the spotlight. Join forces with someone who shares your vision and wants to contribute. Call in favors and listen to suggestions. You can accomplish a great deal if you are disciplined and flexible. Financial gain is heading your way. *****

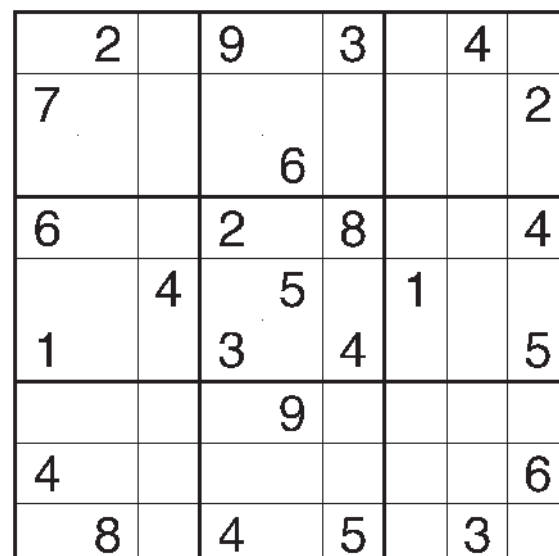
Birthday Baby: You are sensitive, caring and loyal. You are independent and curious.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



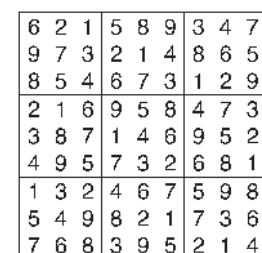
Difficulty Level ★★★★★

11/13

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer



Difficulty Level ★★

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

ESSENTIAL HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

Solution: 8 letters

S E V O T S S P O N G E S T C
L S G N O T L N V L M T W M
W P L A T E S A A H A M M R
O E P E L A C S S P S M A E
B E F T R U S N E A K T P Z R
U A T A U E I W O L L I P E E
C E W M S A T O W E L S N R P
K S Y S T S R E T T A L P S A
E P N R N H S S M O P I K R P
T U U E E O C P H O N A N E T
A C E R P L T A O A M N I G E
B T S E H C T T E O M R F N L
L I N E N S S U O L N P E A I
E E S E I D A L C C B S O H O
R E G N U L P A R E T S A O T

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Westbrook wants out of Houston



In this Aug. 4, 2020 file photo, Houston Rockets' Russell Westbrook (0) dunks the ball during the second half of an NBA game against the Portland Trail Blazers in Lake Buena Vista, Fla. AP

TEXAS—Houston Rockets guard Russell Westbrook wants to leave the team, according to The Athletic's Shams Charania.

The news arrives on the heels of a report that both Westbrook and James Harden share concerns about the future of the franchise. Both former MVP guards have expressed their concerns with team management and their agents, according to the report.

The Rockets lost to the eventual champion Los Angeles Lakers in five games in the second round of the playoffs and have undergone a significant management shakeup this offseason.

Head coach Mike D'Antoni resigned shortly after the end of Houston's season in September. Longtime general manager Daryl Morey left the team a month later. Both have taken new jobs since. D'Antoni joined Steve Nash's coaching staff with the Brooklyn Nets while Morey joined the Philadelphia 76ers as head of basketball operations.

The Rockets promoted longtime assistant general manager Rafael Stone to replace Morey. Veteran assistant and first-time NBA head coach Stephen Silas replaced D'Antoni. Stone told the Houston Chronicle last week that the Rockets remain "all

in" on seeking a championship with the core built around Harden and Westbrook.

"We're still all in," Stone told the Chronicle. "Our goal is to win a championship. We'll do anything we can to get us closer to that goal. ...

"In our situation, lots of [other teams] want our players. That's a great place to be. You have to make sure if you do something, it makes you better. I'm very optimistic the team is going to be very competitive."

Westbrook appears to be unconvinced. Harden, meanwhile, remains committed and is "locked in" for the season, according to Charania.

A team that was built around Harden's talents implementing Morey's vision and D'Antoni's small-ball scheme is now under new management in a loaded Western Conference. It's difficult to see a path for this core to get out of the Western Conference.

Westbrook has three years remaining on a five-year, \$207 million extension he signed with the Oklahoma City Thunder prior to the trade that brought him to Houston last season. He has a player option for the 2022-23 season. If he wants out now, it's going to be on the Rockets' terms.

'Problematic' star-centered culture

Former teammates have de-

scribed the culture in Houston as problematic, sources said, highlighting a situation that caters far too much to its stars.

Rockets role players P.J. Tucker, Eric Gordon, Danuel House and Austin Rivers also had issues last season.

Tucker, the undeniable glue of the team, has been irate over his contract situation all season long, sources said.

Gordon, who won Sixth Man of the Year in 2017 endured a difficult season from an injury standpoint, but was also not pleased with how his role and importance had diminished since the 2016-17 season, sources said.

House was another player who wasn't pleased with his usage and involvement in the offense and has verbally challenged D'Antoni, Harden, and Westbrook this season, sources said. His January outburst in a road win against the Hawks was the first instance where House publicly lost his cool in that manner but this wasn't an isolated incident.

At times, Rivers was unhappy with his inconsistent playing time and utilization, sources said. In one instance, Rivers went on an expletive-laden tirade following a game where D'Antoni called for him to be substituted, only to change his mind and insert new signing DeMarre Carroll. In another instance, Rivers was barked

at by Harden after the former MVP missed a free throw and blamed Rivers—who was standing up by the bench—for distracting him.

Players griping about money, playing time and role?

These are the most normal of NBA problems.

But that they're spilling into the media with years of backlog suggests more serious trouble in Houston. Reports detailed how many former Rockets took exception to the team's culture. The whole article is worth reading.

This all reflects poorly on Harden. He didn't get along well enough with stars Dwight Howard, Chris Paul and now Westbrook. Clearly, role players also have issues. It's just

not that enjoyable to watch Harden dominate the ball in isolation and cover for his poor defensive effort.

Players will tolerate more amid winning. But the Rockets are sliding in the wrong direction.

Plus, Houston had a lame-duck coach in D'Antoni and, in hindsight, a lame-duck general manager in Morey last season. The whole situation was combustible.

So, Tucker agitates about his contract extension. Gordon pins his personal struggles elsewhere. House and Rivers grumble about their roles.

Now what?

Tucker, Gordon and House are still under contract next season. Tucker is in his mid-

30s, so Houston might not rush to guarantee him more money before necessary. Gordon could see a larger role if Westbrook gets traded, but Gordon must stay healthier to take advantage. In the simplest situation: House lost standing in the bubble to complain about, well, anything.

Maybe Harden will look himself in the mirror and adjust his leadership style. But this far into his career, don't count on it. He has been thoroughly enabled (including by Morey, who deserves scrutiny for overseeing this chemistry mess).

New general manager Rafael Stone and coach Stephen Silas have their hands full to set a better culture. *(AP/NBC)*

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USMNT to showcase midfield future

NEW YORK—It is widely expected that Tyler Adams, Weston McKennie and Gio Reyna will all line up for the U.S. Men's National Team against Wales on Thursday, and that is a huge glimpse into the future for the USMNT.

Christian Pulisic will not feature for the USMNT as he continues to recover from a hamstring injury, but USMNT head coach Gregg Berhalter will at least have a midfield trio which will likely be at the heart of the Stars and Stripes for the next 10 years.

When Pulisic is fit, the USMNT will have players from Chelsea, Borussia Dortmund, Juventus and RB Leipzig as their core midfielders. Think about that.

Asked about the excitement of the duo of Adams and McKennie finally playing in midfield together against Wales (Adams has only played once so far for Berhalter due to injury), the USMNT head coach admitted he is looking forward to seeing it.

"They're getting used to each other and it has been fun having them both in camp," Berhalter said. "Tyler is an absolute professional. It is always great to work with him. Weston brings a personality with him, a magnetic personality. The guys are all laughing and all waiting for every word he says. He is a fun guy as well. For us, it is going to be about how do we put that on the field tomorrow. We are looking forward to seeing that. They are both quality players and we are looking forward to seeing them on the field together."

So, that just about confirms that McKennie and Adams will line up together as the two



^{AP}
In this undated file photo, the United States' Tyler Adams, center, and Italy's Emerson, left, fight for the ball during their international friendly soccer match at the Cristal Arena in Genk, Belgium.

up there against Wales.

Following in the footsteps of his USMNT legend of a father Claudio, the Dortmund playmaker admitted his dad still gives him tips after every game, about his own game, and that his parents (who are both with him in Germany right now) are supporting his meteoric rise.

As well as seeing Reyna, McKennie and Adams play together for the USMNT, one of the other interesting things about this national team camp is that the likes of Sebastian Soto, Yunus Musah and Nicholas Gioacchini are all dual nationals who are contemplating committing their future to the U.S.

Reyna is eligible to play for England through birth but has already said he is fully-focused on playing for the USMNT.

Asked what he thought about Adams' comments that dual nationals must feel American to play for this USMNT side.

"It is really their decision. You saw Sergino [Dest] take the decision and he even missed a camp for that, I think. It is not going to be an immediate decision. It is going to take some time," Reyna said. "Like Tyler said, it is really about if they feel American or not and if they are willing to give 100 percent effort for America. Hopefully we can get some of them on to our side." (AP/NBC)

central midfielders. On paper, these two are perfectly suited to play alongside one another. Adams is slightly more defensive but both can get up and down the pitch and they should dovetail really well.

McKennie admitted that the majority of this USMNT squad not playing together for 12 months due to the pandemic has been a little frustrating, and so too is Pulisic being out injured so they can't complete the dream quartet of talented

midfielders.

"It is not only frustrating for the fans and you guys as well. It is frustrating for us," McKennie said. "We really want to be on the same field and play at the same time. It hasn't been that way in the past. Tyler had a really long injury. Christian has been unlucky with his recent injuries and just in the past as well. I missed a camp as well. It is something we are still looking forward to and



definitely fighting towards to be able to accomplish, hopefully sooner rather than later."

"We know we have a chemistry and understanding of how we play and how each of us contributes and play off of each other so that is what makes it nerve-racking for us because we know we could possibly have a really good connection on the field as well. I think Christian and me displayed a little bit of our connection that

we've build and that we had in the Gold Cup and now we are just waiting and hopefully we can get us all on the field at the same time. That way we can all see how good the connection is and hopefully pull out some wins with the whole team and play off each other," he added.

As for the No. 10 position ahead of Adams and McKennie, 17-year-old Reyna is the next big thing in American soccer and is expected to line

CLEVELAND (AP)—Shane Bieber

and Trevor Bauer love to talk pitching. They bonded as teammates with the Cleveland Indians, and stayed in touch after Bauer was traded to the Cincinnati Reds last year.

Bieber got a text from Bauer before this season started. The right-handers had the same Las Vegas odds for the Cy Young Award.

"I said ... why don't we go 2 for 2, or something like that?" Bieber said.

Why not, indeed.

Bieber was a unanimous winner in the American League on Wednesday night, and Bauer became the first pitcher to take home the NL honor for the majors' oldest franchise.

"Nobody's more deserving of it than him and he knows what he wants and he knows how to go out and get it,"

Bieber, Bauer take Cy Young awards

Bieber said. "And we keep in touch. I was truly pulling for him and you know, so is my family. And I know he feels the same way, so it's special."

Bieber and Bauer, two California natives, made it an Ohio sweep on the mound in 2020. They are the third pair of former teammates to win Cy Young Awards in the same season, according to the Elias Sports Bureau. Greg Maddux and Dennis Eckersley in 1992 and Max Scherzer and Rick Porcello in 2016 also accomplished the feat.

Bieber and Bauer had neighboring lockers in Cleveland.

"We've had a close relationship since then," Bauer said. "I think he's one of the best human beings that I've had the pleasure of meeting in professional baseball."

"We talked a little bit

throughout the year about how cool would it be to have ex-teammates win the award together, and here we are. So I'm really happy for him."

Using a versatile repertoire that includes a looping curveball and wipeout slider, Bieber went 8-1 with a 1.63 ERA and 122 strikeouts in 77 1/3 innings during the pandemic-shortened season, leading the majors in ERA and strikeouts and tying Chicago Cubs right-hander Yu Darvish for the most wins.

Bieber became the second player in Indians history to win the AL's pitching Triple Crown, joining Hall of Famer Bob Feller in 1940. He also was the first pitcher to lead the majors in all three categories since Johan Santana for Minnesota in 2006.

Bauer went 5-4 with an NL-best 1.73 ERA in 11

starts, helping the Reds reach the playoffs for the first time since 2013. Animated on the field and outspoken off it, the 29-year-old right-hander struck out 100 in 73 innings and led the majors with two shutouts, a pair of seven-inning performances on double-header days.

He became a free agent after the season and turned down the Reds' qualifying offer, but left the door open for a return.

"I haven't thought about free agency very much yet, to be honest," said Bauer, known for some unusual and progressive training methods that have helped turn him into one of baseball's best pitchers. "I have had a lot of stuff that I've been doing trying to get my offseason underway, trying to get better at baseball."

Darvish finished second

in NL voting by the Baseball Writers' Association of America. New York Mets ace Jacob deGrom was third, falling short in his bid for a third consecutive Cy Young Award.

Bieber was the first unanimous American League winner since Justin Verlander for the Detroit Tigers in 2011. It was the 10th time an AL pitcher was listed first on every ballot.

Minnesota Twins right-hander Kenta Maeda was the AL runner-up, followed by Toronto Blue Jays lefty Hyun Jin Ryu.

The BBWAA will announce the MVPs on Thursday night.

"Today's a good day regardless," Bieber said. "It just makes it that much better that we were able to take this thing home and that it was unanimous."

The 25-year-old Bieber, a

former walk-on at UC Santa Barbara, was selected by Cleveland in the fourth round of the 2016 amateur draft. He made his major league debut in 2018 and went 11-5 with a 4.55 ERA. But he really started to show off his potential last year, winning the MVP award at the All-Star Game and finishing with 15 wins and a 3.28 ERA.

Bieber gave Cleveland its fifth Cy Young Award since CC Sabathia won in 2007. Cliff Lee won in 2008, and Corey Kluber took the prize in 2014 and 2017. Gaylord Perry in 1972 is the only other winner for the Tribe.

It's the first Cy Young Award for Bauer, who tied for sixth in the AL voting in 2018 after he went 12-6 with a 2.21 ERA for the Indians. He was traded to Cincinnati as part of a three-team deal at last year's deadline that moved Yasiel Puig to Cleveland.

Halfway through NFL season, uncertainty reigns off the field



NEW YORK (AP)—From the unbeaten Steelers at the top to the winless Jets at the bottom, predictability has taken a hike halfway through NFL 2020.

There's one main reason, of course: COVID-19.

We can discuss the magnificence of Russell Wilson and Patrick Mahomes, of Aaron Donald and T.J. Watt. We can laud the legwork of Justin Tucker and Jason Sanders, and brag about the brilliant coaching of Brian Flores and Kliff Kingsbury in bringing previous also-rans to playoff contention.

The overriding fact, however, is that the pandemic has determined much of what we've seen thus far, and almost certainly will continue to with the predicted spikes in the coronavirus as the calendar heads toward winter.

Everyone would love to turn attention to the on-field product — well, maybe not Jets fans, though even their

team's hapless start is beyond what their followers' most pessimistic projections could have come up with. Of course, "Tanking for Trevor" doesn't seem so farfetched these days, does it?

But having already seen significant readjustments of the schedule because of COVID-19 outbreaks, plus key people missing games because of the virus, well, the daily questions have become not how is a player performing, but how is he feeling?

"You got to make sure that you're doing the right thing so you can be healthy for your team, and your team's able to play week after week," says standout running back Derrick Henry, whose Titans had the major outbreak of COVID-19 during the first half of the season. "... it's a crazy time right now and every day I say a prayer for this team and for every player on every team around the league. Everybody has families and things like that. This is a serious disease and pray that everybody can



Dallas Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott (4) acknowledges cheers from fans as he is carted off the field after suffering a leg injury during an NFL game against the New York Giants in Arlington, Texas, Sunday, Oct. 11, 2020.

stay healthy, but we're all grown men and you've got to be careful."

Coronavirus outbreaks, readjusted schedules, losing records for home teams—65-67-1 thus far — and tons of major injuries marked the first half of the NFL season.

Uncertainty about what's

ahead for November and December, not to mention for the playoffs and Super Bowl during an ongoing pandemic, could overshadow the on-field product.

And that product has been offensive—in a good way. Through nine weeks, 2020 marks the highest-scoring season in NFL history: 6,737

points, 778 total touchdowns and 745 offensive touchdowns (passing and rushing combined), all the most at this point in a schedule. There's been an average of 50.7 points scored per game, the most through Week 9 since 1970.

Injuries

The pandemic hasn't drawn

attention away from the ever-expanding injured reserve collection because so many big names have landed on that list.

It began in preseason with Denver linebacker Von Miller (ankle), and has not slowed. Blaming the lack of offseason and preseason in-person preparation could account for some of the injuries, particularly soft tissue problems such as hamstrings. But the stream of stars sidelined has been dizzying.

Quarterback Dak Prescott. Running backs Christian McCaffrey and Saquon Barkley. Receivers Michael Thomas and Odell Beckham Jr. Tight ends George Kittle and Zach Ertz. Tackles Taylor Lewan and Tyron Smith. You could do a lot of damage offensively with those guys.

HEAT

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COVID-19 also means that NBA teams will essentially be going to the NBA Draft as blind as a bat. I won't even try to guess who the Minnesota Timberwolves will be choosing No. 1 overall a week from now, but what's definitely certain is whoever they chose won't immediately help them contend for a playoff spot.

LaMelo Ball, Lonzo's brother, at No. 1 is interesting, but Minnesota already has a ball-dominant guard in the person of Angelo Russell. Picking James Wiseman at the spot also brings up questions of redundancy in the frontcourt as the former Memphis Tiger plays the same position

as franchise cornerstone Karl Anthony-Towns. Perhaps, drafting Anthony Edwards (obviously not the actor who played Mark Greene in *ER*) would be the safest bet as the 6'5" swingman from Georgia is an offensive juggernaut that just might be what the doctored ordered for the T'Wolves.

The start of free agency, meanwhile, is the go-ahead date for teams to try to woo, court, entice, and persuade "unencumbered" players to join their team. Players entering free agency fall into two categories—restricted (somewhat encumbered as their previous/present team can always match an offer extended by another team) and unrestricted (akin to Joe finally saying *say-*

onara to his girlfriend).

There's also what you call player and team options. The former simply means the player has the option to pick up his option to return to the team, while the latter is the other way around with the team holding the option to bring back the player.

Just some of the notable free agents for the 2021 NBA offseason include the Los Angeles Lakers' newly minted champion Anthony Davis (player option), San Antonio Spurs' DeMar DeRozan (player option), Cleveland Cavaliers' Andre Drummond (player option), Boston Celtics' Gordon Hayward (player option), New Orleans Pelicans' Brandon Ingram (restricted) and Derrick Favors

(unrestricted), Denver Nuggets' Danilo Gallinari (unrestricted) and Jerami Grant (player option), Utah Jazz's Mike Conley (early termination) and Jordan Clarkson (unrestricted), Toronto Raptors' Fred VanVleet, Marc Gasol, Serge Ibaka (all unrestricted), Los Angeles Clippers' Montrezl Harrell (unrestricted), Sacramento Kings' Bogdan Bogdanovic (restricted), Miami Heat's Goran Dragic (unrestricted), Chicago Bulls' Otto Porter Jr. (player option), Portland Trailblazers' Carmelo Anthony (unrestricted), Orlando Magic's Evan Fournier (player option), and Phoenix Suns' Aron Baynes (unrestricted).

On the trade side, Phoenix superstar Devin Booker sud-

denly wanting out from the Valley of the Sun was a surprise for me given how the team exceeded all expectations by going undefeated in the Orlando bubble. Conventional wisdom merits running it back one more time and see if it's just a byproduct of the bubble or was it something for the long term.

Then there's the trade linking Chris Paul to the Suns. I know they want to placate Booker and CP3 is coming off a sensational run in the 2020 NBA Playoffs. But Paul is already 35 years old and may only play at an all-star level for a couple of more years. Let's face it, he's not in tune with Booker and company's timeline in Phoenix.

When it comes to the stam-

pede of superstar or fringe superstar players wishing to lash on to the Miami Heat bandwagon, I just hope the Godfather Pat Riley won't trade any of the team's young guns in exchange for mercenaries who may or may not even pan out. It means: Don't trade Baby Goat Tyler Herro or Duncan Robinson for a Bradley Beal, Jrue Holiday, Victor Oladipo, or even the Houston Rockets' James Harden and Russell Westbrook. Now, I may do a double-take if the Milwaukee Bucks came a calling and offered Giannis Antetokounmpo for anyone except Jimmy Butler and Bam Adebayo, but my spidey sense is telling me to simply wait for next offseason when the Greek Freak hits free agency.

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weekend with Robin Alvarez ranked No. 15. He will compete anew in the second leg and will be joined by Chris Kim, Skyler Poon, Jihwan Ryu, Seung Woo Lee, and Vince Salvador. The Knights also have a six-runner roster in the girls U18 race with Aleaia Santos, Fiona Bucalig, Kaia Travilla, Erin Frink, Puti'on Camacho, and Amaya Grace Reyes signing up for tomorrow's event.

After their strong starts in the opening leg, both Agape and SIS made changes in their roster to give other runners a chance to race. Caleb Dai, Abraham Zhu, Peter Yang, Timothy Yu, David Zhao, Peter Hu, and Samuel He will compete for Agape's

boys U18. As for SIS boys U18, Pixley is listed only as alternate, as the Geckos will field Charles McDonald, Jimin Woo, Ivan Li, Matthew Berline, Andrew Sablan, and Yunwoo Nam in tomorrow's event. In the girls U18, Helen Kim and Rachel Shin will have their season debut and will join returnees Cabrera, Linxi Cai, Puper Liske-Clark, and Jinnie Thompson.

Tomorrow's high school course will cover a distance of 3.1 miles and runners are required to complete the race in 35 minutes of they will be ushered out of the field and their results will be marked as did not finish.

Runners have to go through at least one qualifying race to earn a slot to the championship round, which is set for Dec. 5.



Elementary school runners head out to the course during the opening of the 2020-2021 Public School System/Northern Marianas Athletics All Schools Cross Country Series last Friday at the CPA Airport Field.

In the finale, only schools with at least four runners will qualify for the division champion-

ship, but they are still allowed to field a maximum of six students in each age group. The

division winner will be determined by the performance of their Top 4 finishers, as points

will be given to each runner (one for first, 2 for second, and so on). The team with the least points wins.

Meanwhile, the elementary (U11) and middle school's (U14) second leg will also take place this weekend.

The U11 races will be held this afternoon with Brilliant Star School, SIS, Agape, Kagman Elementary School, and Mt. Carmel bringing in new runners, while Isla Montessori School will stick to its opening leg roster for the 1.1-mile run.

The U14 competition will take place this Saturday after the U18 races with Agape, Hopwood, Mt. Carmel, SIS, and Francisco M. Sablan Middle School having a mixed of opening leg participants and new ones for the 2.1-mile event.

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USMNT to
showcase
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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

More competitive HS race

No Heat of the moment trades

MARKSMAN

By MARK RABAGO

Associate Editor

Growing up Mark wanted to play pro basketball. When his talent and height didn't measure up, he opted for a career in journalism instead.



Now that the NBA has set a Dec. 22 start date for the 2021 season, that only means that the NBA Draft and the start of free agency are just around the corner.

In fact, the NBA Draft is next week on Nov. 18 and the start of free agency is two days later on Nov. 20. That means the unofficial start of the Association's 75th season—its diamond jubilee—will come just a month and six days after the Los Angeles Lakers hoisted championship No. 17 in the Orlando bubble after outlasting the gritty Miami Heat in six games.

While it indeed will be a welcome Christmas gift for round-ball fans like me, I have this feeling that NBA players will not welcome the idea of having such a short break between the Finals and the start

of the season. So will the short interval result in the scrapping of Summer League—rather Winter League—or preseason games?

As always revenue played a big part in a rushed start for the 2021 NBA season as the teams were projected to lose upward of \$1 billion if they opted for a January start. Players—rookies more than veterans—also will no longer have the benefit of Summer League and preseason games and this might result in sloppy play and, God forbid, injuries to out-of-shape players. Other than those concerns, I'm all for watching NBA games while waiting for Santa Claus to bring me my Christmas gifts.

The cancellation of NCAA basketball due to

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In this Nov. 1, 2019 file photo, Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo gets past Orlando Magic's Markelle Fultz, left, and Gary Clark during the second half of an NBA game in Orlando, Fla.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

High school runners are still in a close race in the first few meters of the opening leg of the 2020-2021 Public School System/Northern Marianas Athletics All Schools Cross Country Series last Saturday at the CPA Airport Field.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

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REPORTER

Defending champion Agape Christian School and opening leg winner Saipan International School may have to brace for tougher competition in the second part of the 2020-2021 Public School System/Northern Marianas Athletics All Schools Cross Country Series as two more teams are fielding complete rosters for tomorrow's event at the CPA Airport Field.

Marianas High School and Mt. Carmel School have listed a full crew for the second leg of the U18 qualifying races, posing a great challenge to Agape and SIS.

The Geckos swept the top honors in the series opener with Ran-Rex Pixley ruling the boys high school race last Saturday and Tiana Cabrera winning the girls division. Agape, on the other hand, had best overall performance in the boys U18 race with six of its runners making it to the Top 10, including the No. 2 to No. 4 spots, which Ray Qi, Eason Tang, and Allen Luo occupied. In the girls division, although Cabrera handed SIS the top finish, Agape runners domi-

nated the overall rankings, getting the second to seventh places in the ladder.

MHS did not field a single runner in the girls U18 race last weekend, but will have a full crew this Saturday with Jerlyn Castillo and Kina Rangamar anchoring the Lady Dolphins. Allyssya Angeles, Leani Acosta, Sedrei Camacho, Marnickka Teigita, and alternate Ria Rengiil complete the squad. In the boys division, opening leg participant Blake Mister, Anthony Bergancia and Jim Maniago will be back and will team up with Brian Lubao, Sildrey Veloria, Daniel Mar Pablo, and alternate John Lloyd Dela Cruz. Some MHS runners missed the opening



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan International School runners and coach Kathy Ruszala huddle before going to the starting line of the U11 race last Friday at the CPA Airport Field.

leg, as they joined a duathlon/trail run event in Marpi held simultaneously with the cross country kick-off.

Mt. Carmel had only one entry to the boys U18 race last

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